

THE
**SOCIALIST
STANDARD**

1953

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 581 Vol. 49 Jan., 1953

**CAPITALISM—UNSTABLE
AND UNPREDICTABLE**

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

THE PASSING SHOW

ABOUT BOOKS

**REACHING FOR
THE MOON**

CUSTOM AND POWER

SLINGS AND ARROWS

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

4^D

South Africa

Makes Crime Pay

THE ABOVE IS THE TITLE of an article by the Johannesburg correspondent of the *Economist*, which in its issue of September 6th, presents us with an interesting sidelight on labour relations in South African agriculture. It appears that in the Kroonstad district of the Orange Free State,

"the new goldfields nearby are drawing labour away from the farms; and in any case the Africans are showing an increasing aversion to farm work. Under the masters and servants act, a farmer can still pursue a runaway worker, and have him first fined, and then forced back to work. But the Africans, it seems, now resent this."

Obviously the good farmers of Kroonstad had got to find a solution to this distressing dilemma. They might raise wages, and thus make farm work more attractive. (They might, but not if they could avoid it.) There must (they reasoned) be some way out of the difficulty. And there was.

During the last year or two, the article continues, the South African Government

"has pursued a deliberate policy of building 'outpost' prisons in rural areas, and allowing farmers to hire convict labour from them." There are now 12 such outpost Jails in South Africa, but until recently there were none in the Free State. "The farmers of Kroonstad district therefore applied to the government for a prison in their area. As there was apparently some difficulty in finding the money for it, the farmers hit on an ingenious expedient."

Any private enterprise enthusiasts who may be reading this should follow the next bit carefully.

"A leading Kroonstad farmer, Mr. George Verster, organised 22 other farmers into a private company, on a normal shareholding basis. The farmers subscribed £12,000 in £1 shares and elected Mr. Verster their chairman. Mr. Verster then approached the government with the proposition that the company build and equip a prison, if the government would stock it with convicts."

"The government was enthusiastic about the proposal, and it was arranged that when the new prison was built the government would supply 350 African convicts whom the Kroonstad farmers company could hire by paying the state 1s. 9d. per head per day" (the convicts of course get nothing).

It's amazing. Crime has now donned the mantle of virtue, ascended to the Elysian fields of commercial respectability, to be sanctified in the name of profit. But hold hard—of course only the "best type" of convicts are employed, this is those who are serving sentences "of from six to fifteen

years for slaying or wounding fellow Zulus in tribal fights. Thus they are not ordinary criminals, and by working for Mr. Verster and his friends they will be removed from contamination by hardened, habitual criminals." Presumably by this is meant those revolting specimens of abysmal depravity the perpetrators of theft.

The only snag that the farmers of Kroonstad had to overcome was the fact that the cost of building and equipping the desired penal residence, was just over double the amount subscribed. What did they do about it? Use convict labour to build it! In this way you can build a £25,000 jail for £12,000. This we may presume is what in bourgeois circles is known as thrift. The name of the new prison is Geneva "perhaps, in grateful recognition of the fact that the South African Government does not subscribe to the I.L.O. Convention against the hiring out of convict labour for private profit."

We note that one of the many merits of this scheme is that it is "thoroughly democratic."

"By this is meant that under the rules of the company, the farmers will be treated in exactly the same way as far as getting convicts is concerned, whatever the differences in the size of their contributions to the scheme."

When opening a new—civic building—if we may be permitted the phrase, it is customary to enliven the proceedings with a little ceremony. So the new jail was formally opened by Mr. Swart the Minister of Justice, accompanied by the Director of Prisons who, strange as it may seem, is Mr. George Verster's uncle,

Mr. Victor Verster.

Mr. Swart made a long speech (there were doubtless other long speeches) in which he:

"Stoutly defended the jail farm system . . . praised Mr. Verster and his fellow farmers for their excellent idea (which he frankly confessed would save the state a lot of money), remarked laughingly that the convicts were lucky fellows who would get plenty of fine fresh air, and finally promised that, as Minister of Justice, he would see to it that 'many more' farm jails were built in the shortest possible space of time."

The jollifications were concluded by the unveiling of a commemorative tablet and the consumption of numerous cups of coffee and plates of cake. We are not a little puzzled by the fact that the principal participants in the scheme were not invited to this "tea party." But perhaps they would have been embarrassed. As it happened, the press in the person of the *Johannesburg Star*, took a rather poor view of this business, regarding it as "morally reprehensible" and as an "investment in Crime," since it is now in the interests of farmers to build prisons and the state to keep them filled. But it appears that both the farmers and the Minister of Justice are impervious to criticism, and are firmly convinced that they are helping the convicts by what is called "rehabilitating them" and "helping the country" (time-honoured phrase) by providing cheap labour. "What other country, they may well demand, can point to such achievements? When was there ever such a magnificent example of philanthropy and five-per cent?"

I.D.J.

SLINGS AND ARROWS

He even shocks himself

When some months ago General Templer, in charge of the British Forces in Malaya, imposed collective punishments on some villages there for the crime of not volunteering information, we were reminded of the howls of indignation that greeted similar tactics when applied by the Nazis. Mr. Oliver Lyttleton, commenting on these punishments at the time, staunchly avowed that no great sacrifice was involved for the villagers concerned. Knowing that he himself had given up 19 directorships, and ten per cent. of his ministerial salary as well as refusing the use of a government car, we were glad to accept him as an authority on sacrifice.

Events in Kenya, already commented on in last month's "SOCIALIST STANDARD," have led the Government to introduce similar measures to those in Malaya. Mr. Lyttleton this time comes forward and with engaging candour tells us that he is "shocked by many of the things that had to be done" in Kenya (*Daily Mirror*, 5/12/52). But this did not prevent him from pointing to the successful results achieved by such punishments in Malaya and is convinced that similar results will occur in Kenya. Whatever else we may think of Mr. Lyttleton's naked and brutal opportunism, he is at least honest. He does not dress these measures in eloquent language, nor does he maintain that they are being done for the good of the natives, as so many politicians are fond of doing. (During the tenure of the Labour Government, they opposed the abolition of corporal

punishment in the colonies because, it was claimed, it was for the good of the African). He states bluntly that law and order, and we know what he means by that, must be restored and he is not too much concerned with the methods used. And if he is shocked that's too bad, he is quite prepared to stomach that provided the policy is successful.

The offence committed by these uprooted tribesmen now held in compounds (polite name for concentration camps) is that they did not give information to the police who were investigating some murders. According to Mr. Lyttleton, they (the natives) did not have the "guts" to come forward.

We are glad that he has made this statement. If ever an invader succeeds in occupying our Island home and demands information we shall be able to give it in the knowledge that we are showing our "guts," and that our Government has established the precedent. It will be no use telling the occupying power that we regard giving information as treason. They will only quote Mr. Lyttleton. And when the war will be over and the invader driven out, we shall tell the Government who wants to charge us with fraternising, that Mr. Lyttleton said it was alright. Of course, those who know the Socialist Party will be well aware that we would have no truck in war or peacetime with either home or imported Government, but the logical outcome of Mr. Lyttleton's theory is that outlined. It is the impasse in which every professional politician finds himself sooner or later because he sacrifices principle to

expediency and because he has to run the present social order in the interests of capitalism.

* * *

There's no pleasing him

Following a successful debate with Mr. George Schwartz of the *Sunday Times*, the Secretary of Fulham Branch wrote to Sir Herbert Williams, M.P., asking him to debate with us on the same subject, "Capitalism or Socialism." Sir Herbert is nothing if not a good correspondent, for by return of post came his answer declining the invitation as he is "too busy" and in any event "I see no point in advertising what has always been a very tiny society, the objects of which I have always disapproved." Here is some peculiar logic. Does he refuse to debate with us because he disapproves of our object? Or is it because he is too busy? Or because we are a very tiny society? If because he is too busy the rest of his excuses are irrelevant. If because he disapproves of our object, does he only debate with those with whom he agrees? If so it must be conducted on the "after you Claude," "No, after you Cecil" principle. Perhaps Sir Herbert does not know the meaning of the word debate. The Oxford Concise Dictionary gives it as meaning "Contests . . . dispute about . . . controversy . . ."

The question of "not advertising a very tiny society" puzzles us. We have always known that Sir Herbert was a great upholder of free enterprise and the right of the little man to become a great tycoon. If a little man why not a very tiny society? One would have thought that by helping us along the road to become a large society he would demonstrate the advantages of his system not only to the world in general but to ourselves in particular. But Sir Herbert may perhaps realise that if he helps us to become great he will also help to undermine the system he supports but which he seems so reluctant to defend in debate.

Some weeks ago, Sir Herbert was invited to a jubilee dinner of the Croydon Chamber of Commerce. He walked out in disgust after creating a scene because he and other Croydon M.P.s present were not called on to speak nor were they mentioned in the official toast list. Is there no pleasing him? He is annoyed because he is not allowed to speak and then refuses an invitation to speak at great length at no expense to him whatsoever.

In order that he may not feel too frustrated we announce that the invitation is still open, that we are still prepared to debate with him; we guarantee that he will be called on to speak not once but three times, and that although there will be no official toast list for him to be mentioned in, we promise to instruct our representative to mention his name as often as possible. Can Sir Herbert ask for more?

* * *

The Secret of Success

This column last month dealt with the advice tendered by manufacturers of Milk Foods and similar commodities, and asserted that the advertisers themselves did not believe the fictions they invented in order to push sales.

From the news columns this time comes some advice which readers may find of great interest. Mr. Gibson Jarvie, Chairman of the United Dominions Trust, expressed the view that the days had gone when a man could build up a business from "nothing to

millions." This pronouncement coming to the attention of the *Sunday Express* (19/10/52) a reporter was assigned to the task of collecting the views of several "self-made men" on this subject.

Most of them think that you can make millions provided you follow certain principles. Mr. Steven Hardie, ex-Head of the Steel Corporation, and darling of the Labour Party, tells us to be charming, and above all to "concentrate." Mr. Hugh Fraser, head of a Scottish drapery concern worth "millions" according to the reporter gives three rules, one of which is certain to make somebody a millionaire, even if not the person who carries it out. "Don't watch the clock," he exhorts. This is a safe bet for somebody. If thousands of young men anxious to get on "don't watch the clock" it will mean that they are working more for correspondingly less money. Their bosses will therefore gain, even if the young men don't progress. Mr. Harry Ferguson the tractor king tells us that if we have to choose a partner we should choose a money grubber. Is that the secret of his success, or, did some other fortunate "self-made man," apply this rule and find Mr. Ferguson? Other millionaires mention hard work and long hours, as was only to be expected. How these capitalists love the words, and how they love workers to put them into action.

Mr. Smedley, the Canned Food tycoon, however, does not agree. He tells us "If your chosen job is hard work, you have chosen wrongly." He thus agrees with the late Lord Wakefield who admitted that the secret of his success was that he had hired other people to do the work for him. And that of course is absolutely correct. Hard work does build up businesses, but not the hard work of the boss or the proprietor.

None of these self-made men interviewed by the *Express* mentioned intelligence as a necessary ingredient for success. Judging from the trite platitudes, and hoary clichés they produced the reason for this omission is obvious. S.A.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Every Alternate Sunday throughout the Winter 1952-3

DENISON HOUSE HALL

296, VAUXHALL BRIDGE ROAD, S.W.1
(Nr. Victoria Station)

SUNDAYS at 7 p.m.

4th January	"Revolution"	— R. Ambridge
15th January	"The Geography of Hunger"	— J. D'Arcy
1st February	To be announced	— C. May

All Welcome.

Questions and Discussion.

A PUBLIC MEETING

at the

ISLINGTON CENTRAL LIBRARY

HOLLOWAY ROAD, (2 minutes Highbury Tube Station).

Wednesday 14th January, 1953 at 7.30 p.m.

"VIOLENCE TO-DAY; ITS CAUSE AND CURE"

Speaker: C. MAY

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

The activities of Ealing Branch continue to expand slowly but surely. In general, it may be said that although the branch has recently declined in numerical strength, the proportion of active and enthusiastic members has considerably increased.

The local propaganda committee is very busy arranging debates, one of which, with George Schwarz, has already been successfully held at Kensington Town Hall. Further debates in the course of preparation are as follows:—Richmond Methodist College, January 1953 (venue Richmond); Peace Pledge Union, February (venue Greenford); and The Commonwealth Party, February (venue Hammersmith).

Winter activities of this branch have also included a series of very stimulating forums and debates between members.

Efforts to increase the sales of "THE SOCIALIST STANDARD" are meeting with small but constant success.

The practice adopted is to canvass a given area, taking note of those addresses where the journal is purchased. The following month, a list of these is handed to a member whose sole duty it is to follow up the new contacts. The canvassers are then free to explore fresh areas and so help to maintain circulation of the "S.S." It has been found that this method adds an average of two new subscribers every month to the list of "regulars."

Some results are also obtained by selling outside the busier railway stations, and by a system of "Sale or Return" through news-agents in areas such as Hammersmith, Ealing, Southall, Greenford and Hayes.

We regret to announce that after a few weeks' illness our Comrade Charles Lestor died on 23rd November. A short note appears elsewhere in this issue reminding readers of his years of work for the Socialist cause. P.H.

THE PASSING SHOW

Tito and Friends

After Mr. Bevan's recent visit to Marshal Tito, many of the Conservative newspapers drew attention to the friendship between the two men, and concluded that perhaps Mr. Bevan was aiming at a similar position for himself over here. The argument has some force. It is not such a big step from thinking a Tito regime is a good thing for Yugoslavia to thinking a similar regime is a good thing for Britain. But Mr. Bevan defended himself by saying that he wanted peace between the peoples of Yugoslavia and those of Britain, and that such visits as his would, in some way unexplained, contribute to the maintenance of that peace.

Now Mr. Eden, too, has accepted the hospitality of Tito, and got on so well with him that the Marshal is to pay a return visit to him in this country. If Mr. Bevan's friendship with Tito leads to a danger of Mr. Bevan becoming too fond of dictatorship, and perhaps imagining himself as Tito's counterpart in Britain, then clearly the same danger will exist when Mr. Eden becomes friendly with the same dictator. But so far this obvious thought has not, apparently, occurred to any of the Tory papers. Could it be that these journals are less concerned with the danger of dictatorship as such than with the danger of a dictator emerging from a political party other than the Conservative?

Peace and goodwill towards some

When questioned in the Commons, Mr. Eden defended himself with the same argument that Mr. Bevan had used. Of the Marshal's impending visit, he said:

"It had been, and remained, the conviction of the Government that it was likely to be beneficial to the people of Yugoslavia and of Britain, that our relations should be steadily improved, and the Government intended to persevere in the cause of peace. (The Times, 2-12-52.)

But if British Capitalism can be friendly to Yugoslavia in spite of the dictatorship there, why cannot we be friendly towards Russia and Poland and Rumania which also have dictatorships? So far from improving

its relations with Stalinist countries, the Government uses the fact that they are dictatorships as one of its main excuses for the re-armament of the country against them. The truth is that the internal form of government of a country has nothing to do with the hostility or friendship of the British Government towards it. Britain's foreign relations are determined by the extent to which the commercial and strategic interests of other states coincide or differ with those of the British ruling class: and the internal government of those states is entirely irrelevant in the decisions as to peace or hostility.

Keep the Red Flag—

Three Labour M.P.s—Mr. John Hall (Gateshead West), Mr. Mitchison (Kettering), and Mr. Viant (Willesden West)—have been thinking deeply about the situation in which the working-class finds itself, with capitalist exploitation at home, and "small" wars, and the threat of bigger ones, abroad. So they were ready with vigorous measures when their names came out of the hat in the ballot for private members' bills.

Mr. John Hall is to present a Pharmacy Bill to amend the law relating to Pharmacy.

Mr. Mitchison is to present a bill to amend the law relating to the provision of omnibus shelters and the rights of local authorities in connection therewith.

Mr. Viant is to present a bill to prohibit the sale of toy weapons "calculated to incite to acts of violence."

You're wasting your time, Mr. Viant. Our whole system of society is "calculated to incite to acts of violence." If you don't believe that, join the Army and try telling the sergeant that you don't like being "incited to acts of violence." The reply might open your eyes as well as widen your vocabulary. And why stop at prohibiting toy weapons? Why not work for the introduction of Socialism, which would abolish all weapons, from flame-throwers to hydrogen-bombs, instead of concerning yourself with the feeble reflections of these weapons which appear in toyshop windows?

—Flying High

Other Labour Party comrades hotly engaged on the day-to-day front are Mr. Glanville and Mr. Rankin. On November 18th Mr. Glanville (Consett) asked Mr. Churchill "what arrangements were proposed to include contingents representing all aspects of industrial life in the coronation procession in order to make the procession fully representative of the industrial as well as the military power of Britain." If Mr. Glanville knows how this will affect the class-position in society of Britain's workers he has so far kept it dark. On the same day Mr. Rankin (Glasgow, Tradeston) wanted to know what the Prime Minister had done about "the question of the introduction of legislation concerning the style and title of the Sovereign." Perhaps Mr. Rankin would also like to know what the Socialist Party would do about the style and title of the Sovereign: if he cares to enquire, the Glasgow branch could tell him shortly and succinctly.

This Way to the Tomb

Paradoxical though it may seem, Mr. Harry Pollitt is probably very thankful for the fact that the Stalinists have never gained power in Britain; or he should be, if he knows the recent history of Russia and Eastern Europe. For experience teaches that very few of the leaders in any Bolshevik revolution live long to tell the tale. This is not new in revolutions. The Abbé Sieyès, when asked what he had done during the French Revolution, thought it enough to reply "J'ai vécu"—"I survived." The toll extends to the most eminent of the revolutionaries. Who was more prominent in Russia, along with Lenin, than Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev and Bukharin? Who more prominent than Rajk in Hungary, Kostov in Bulgaria, Pauker in Rumania, Gomulka in Poland? But the first two have already fallen to the executioner, while the others are in prison without trial.

Survival of the failures

It was believed for a time that the Secretary-General of the Party at least would be safe, since it was from this position that Marshal Stalin himself scored his notable successes against his late comrades-in-arms. Surely, it was thought, the secretary of the party should be able to work things so that the others would be the deviationists. But now Rudolf Slansky, until 1951 Secretary-General of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, has met his end at the hands of the hangman; now nobody is safe. Mr. Pollitt, who holds Mr. Slansky's job in the British Communist Party, must be feeling insecure.

Two other leading European Communists probably owe their lives to the fact that, politically, they have failed—M. Marty and M. Tillon. Both these men have spent their political lives working to make France into a Stalinist state; and if they had succeeded, they would now be repenting their disagreement with the other leaders of the party in a Stalinist jail. As it is, the worst the party can do is to expel them.

First the criminal, then the crime

That the trials are bogus, and the confessions obtained by torture or duress of some kind is obvious from what the Stalinists themselves tell us. It is not only that unfortunate mistakes will keep cropping up

in the evidence of even the best primed witness for the prosecution: other features point the same way. For example, the length of time it is necessary to keep the prisoners in jail before they are tried. In the latest trial, in Prague in November, all the accused had been in prison since 1951, and many had been arrested in 1950. The official Czechoslovak story is that this long interval was necessary in order for the "crimes" of the accused to be investigated. But shouldn't investigation come before arrest? Until one investigates, one does not know what crimes have been committed, much less who committed them. And if the accused were guilty of a tenth of the offences charged in the indictments, the interests of the State itself would be best served by speedy trial.

"I felt like a bourgeois"

Again, the hollowness of the confessions emerges from an examination of the charges against the fallen leaders. Slansky and his fellow-prisoners were all accused of something called Trotsky-Titoism, of having been national bourgeois traitors, of having worked for the American imperialists and conspired against the Czechoslovak State. Slansky in particular admitted to espionage, high treason and sabotage. He said "he had never been a true Communist, having always felt more like a bourgeois, and had acted accordingly. He had committed many crimes against the Communists in Czechoslovakia, he said, and was guilty of the death of the national hero Sverma, who died in the mountains in a snow-storm, deserted by him." He admitted collaborating with Mr. Ziliacus, whom he alleged to be an agent of the British espionage services, and with Tito agents. "With the Zionist movement he had collaborated mainly through economic help for Israel to the disadvantage of Czechoslovakia, and he had been collaborating with imperial agents of the free-masons." (The Times, 25-11-52.)

Not cricket

Some commentators find the very mention of British and American spies suspicious, as if the British ruling class were too gentlemanly to employ such instruments. But all capitalist states employ spies: they have to in order to secure information about other states, every one of which is a possible enemy in a future war. Any state which did not have an espionage service would be letting its rivals steal a march on it.

What does give the game away is the very blackness with which the accused depict themselves. Slansky, for example, admits to collaborating with the spies of America, Britain, Tito, the freemasons and the Zionists. Others of the accused admit to helping the enemies of the Stalinists as far back as before the second world war. From the Stalinist point of view, no conduct could be lower. And yet here are these desperate men, self-accused of all the crimes in the Communist calendar, admitting everything in minute detail, and appealing to be sent to the gallows. Though they are, according to their own words in court, scoundrels and criminals of the deepest dye, they come forward like lambs to the slaughter—and slaughter it is: only three of the fourteen accused at Prague escaped execution. After many years' supposed secret opposition to the Communist Party, they now do exactly what the Communist Party wants, make full and grovelling confes-

sions. If, as the Communists say, these confessions have not been extorted under duress then they are absolutely inexplicable; they are in complete contradiction to all the "facts" which they contain. And if they are obtained under duress, they are worthless.

All his fault

If, then, these trials will not stand up to impartial scrutiny, what is the real reason for them? The answer lies in the very nature of dictatorship. In all capitalist states (whether of the private enterprise or state control variety) there have to be scapegoats; shortages, unemployment, war, lack of housing, are blamed not on the system which breeds them, but on the shortcomings of this or that politician. Under the two-party system, each party blames the other. If one's own party is out of power, then the Government is at fault; if one supports the Government, then the excuse is "We have to clear up the mess left by the last Government." But in dictatorships there is no other party to fill this role; so scapegoats have to be manufactured for the occasion. And the evidence goes to show that it takes at least a year to turn out a sufficiently self-accusing prisoner: hence the long gap between arrest and trial, which it would be impossible to account for in any other way.

Three more for the garden path

Naturally, when the trials have been decided on, the ruling class uses them in every way it can. Just as recovery from the last war, and preparation for the next one, are used to exhort the workers to greater efforts on both sides of the Iron Curtain, so are the "revelations" in the trials used to spur on the proletariat in the productivity drives. On the day the sentences were announced in the Prague trial, two miners and an electrical worker broadcast on the Czech radio. "The miners said they and their comrades had already decided to work harder to repair the damage done by the dastardly saboteurs." (*The Times*, 28-11-52.) And the electrical worker said that while listening to the sentences that morning he and his mates had decided to work an extra voluntary shift and give their earnings to the Koreans "as an expression of gratitude to the judges."

We wonder how this went down with the Czech workers.

Recruit for the Socialist Party?

Brigadier Rayner, Tory M.P. for Totnes, delivered himself of two contradictory statements in the same

sentence in the Commons on November 10th. He said: "Back-benchers, who are leaders in their constituencies, should tell the rank and file that they cannot continue to work less than workers in other countries and live better than they; and that they are now going to get the standard of living they deserve." Up to the semi-colon this is routine ruling-class stuff, the natural reaction of employers to the rumours that in India and Africa you can get workers for a handful of rice a day. The attempt to beat British workers down to that standard too is the form that the employers' jealousy takes. But after the semi-colon the Brigadier makes the revolutionary statement that the workers are now going to get the standard of living they deserve. This can only mean that the Brigadier has been converted to Socialism. But in fairness we had better warn him that the property-owners are not going to take kindly to the abolition of surplus value.

It has been suggested that what the honourable member really meant was this: "Back-benchers should tell the rank and file that they (the back-benchers) cannot continue to work less than workers in other countries and live better than they; and that they (the back-benchers) are now going to get the standard of living they deserve." The rank and file should be pleased, though surprised, to hear this from so authoritative a source. Whichever interpretation is correct, we shall watch developments with interest.

I brought this for you, sir

You may sometimes have heard from agitators that employers are not really grateful to their workers. But this is not always true, or so it seemed when we first heard about Mr. H. Hollingsworth, who has been working for the Raleigh company since 1900. The firm recently held a luncheon which Mr. Hollingsworth attended, and a presentation was made of a silver key shaped like a polo stick. Now this seemed sensible. For any one who is about to receive that last insult of the capitalist class to their aged workers, the old age pension, would find anything which could be pawned very useful. But on reading the news-item again it transpired that the Duke of Edinburgh had been present, and that Mr. Hollingsworth had not been given the key, but had only been brought in to give the key to the Duke. Along with a piece of Crown Derby china, it was the Duke's reward for having opened a new wing of the factory.

Well, never mind. After all, the worker was allowed to handle it for a moment or two.

A.W.E.

ABOUT BOOKS

Spartacus was the leader of the third, and greatest, slave revolt against Rome (about 73 B.C.). A Thracian by birth and a gladiator, he rallied an army of slaves and, over a period of years, by adroit generalship, he defeated army after army of Roman soldiers sent against him, until the revolt was finally suppressed with great cruelty.

It was almost inevitable that a writer like Mr. Howard Fast, who selects the subjects for his novels from the struggles of exploited peoples against their

oppressors, should eventually write a book about this revolt. His latest book, "Spartacus," published by The Bodley Head (13/6) may not be such a gripping story as some of his earlier writings, but it is splendid reading and is to be recommended.

This story is not a chronological history of the slave rebellion. It is more in the nature of a symposium, the story being told through the mouths of a variety of characters each of whom views the revolt from a different angle. Licinius Crassus, the Roman

general who led the army that eventually defeated the slaves; Lentulus Gracchus, a shrewd, successful Roman politician; Lentulus Batiatus, who kept the school for gladiators at Capua from which Spartacus escaped; Marcus Tullius Cicero, who later became the famous Roman philosopher, writer, politician, orator and consul; David, a fictitious Jewish rebel slave who in the book was closely associated with Spartacus from beginning to end of the revolt; these are some of the characters who tell the story and discuss the problems of chattel slave society.

A number of these problems have their parallel in present day capitalism, as, no doubt, Mr. Fast intends us to realise. Instance, unless the slaves could destroy the chattel slave system there was nowhere for them to go and nothing for them to do but to struggle until they were either killed or driven back into slavery. So it is with wage workers. Unless they abolish capitalism, struggle how they may, they will remain an exploited class.

The author gives a clear analysis of the Roman republic. It was a world in which the majority had nothing whilst a few had almost everything. Those who owned so much, needed protection from the slaves who produced it for them. The Roman soldiers, in the main, were peasants who had been driven from their land in order that slave plantations could be developed. The slave plantation had turned them into landless paupers. They had no more to defend than the rebel slaves whom they were sent to fight against. Those who owned nothing, who possessed no slaves, had to march their feet off, live in filth and squalor, wallow in blood and die fighting the slaves, in order that the slave owners could live in comfort and luxury. Had the Roman soldier but realised it, he had more to gain from a slave victory than from a slave defeat.

The job of the Roman politician was to be an illusionist, to convince the landless Romans that they had power, that they were the strength and glory of Rome, that they were free and that their freedom was precious, that they controlled their civilisation by their vote, to make them feel proud and superior because they were not slaves. Then, no matter how they stank, how hungry they were or where they slept, they felt proud and ready to defend the society that kept them in that condition against those who were their companions in misery—the slaves.

The horrors of crucifixion and gladiatorial combat, the depraved morality of the Roman leisure class, the comradeship within the many-tongued slave army and the hopes and fears of the slave leaders are splendidly dealt with in this book. It is well worth reading.

In an introductory note the author tells that, with the help of friends, he had to publish this book himself in America. Owing to the political temper of the times no commercial publisher would undertake the publication and distribution of such a book in the U.S.A.

Penguin Books are publishing a new series on the development of English society. It is to comprise eight "Pelican" books with the following titles:

1. Roman Britain.
2. The Beginnings of English Society (From the Anglo-Saxon Invasion).
3. English Society in the Early Middle Ages.
4. England in the Late Middle Ages.

5. Tudor England.

6. England in the Seventeenth Century.

7. England in the Eighteenth Century.

8. England in the Nineteenth Century.

All except the first of these series have been published. Each book is by a separate author and each author is a specialist in the period about which he, or she, writes.

The authors have had a free hand with their work, with the consequence that each has put his own emphasis on different aspects of social development, but, in general, the series is good.

Certain chapters in these books are complete essays in themselves and very useful essays, too. Instance the chapter "John Wesley and the Road to Salvation," in "England in the Eighteenth Century," by J. H. Plumb.

The influence of Wesley's early life and his parents is dealt with. When, after 1738, he started to preach his Methodism and to build the organisation of Methodist chapels he was helped by the fact that the newly developed industry in this country was creating a number of new towns which had no churches. The tie-up between the Anglican church organisation and the state was such that the Anglican church ignored the new towns and so Wesley had a clear field. He had a violent dislike for radicalism and preached that the people should have no share in government. For him, the way to reform the evils of society was to transform the will of the individual. He preached thrift, abstinence, hard work and concentration. It was the puritanism of the previous century shorn of its political radicalism. To an embryo capitalist class, striving by thrift and frugality to accumulate greater capital this teaching had a great appeal.

Wesley was intensely superstitious. He believed in witches and the possession by devils. His teaching called for no exercise of the intellect and appealed to his uneducated working class audiences. The owners of the workshops and factories that were growing up all over England, following the inventions of Savery and Newcomen, Arkwright and Hargreaves, the Darby's of Coalbrookdale and others, were demanding more and more child labour. Poverty stricken workers had need of the few pence that their children could earn. Wesley taught that play was unworthy of a Christian child, that a child's sole education need be only a knowledge of the Bible and the Catechism, that for the sake of its everlasting life a child should be at work. So, a Methodist could regard his overworked children with complacency. Methodism flourished through discipline and toil in the ugliness of suburbs and the industrial villages of England.

But the Methodist teaching destroyed its own objective. Wesley himself wrote, at the age of 84, that, through diligence and frugality many of his disciples were increasing their wealth and, as their wealth increased so did their pride, their anger and their desires of the flesh. Although the form of Methodism remained, the spirit was vanishing.

This Pelican History of England is, in total, very useful. There is another Pelican book entitled "Pre-historic Britain" which, although not one of this series, is a useful addition to it as a prelude to the series proper.

W. WATERS.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JANUARY,



1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

CAPITALISM—UNSTABLE
AND UNPREDICTABLE

MANY arguments have been used in praise or in defence of the capitalist system but none of its defenders has ever been able to deny its instability or to produce even a plausible case for regarding instability as a blessing. Being unable on past evidence to deny that it lapses periodically into devastating crises with consequent increased misery for the workers who become unemployed, its defenders seek to escape the charge by arguing that crises will not happen again. The capitalists profess to have gained experience which will enable them to avoid crises while the Labour Party puts its trust in planning. But experience shows how wrong they both are. They can neither foresee the violent eruptions of the system nor devise any practicable scheme to prevent them. (Fancy schemes which require for their application the universal agreement and co-ordinated action of capitalists and governments the world over are not worth the paper they are written on—capitalism is not that sort of system).

For evidence of our contention we need only look at the attempts of politicians and economists over a period of years to foresee developments. They might just as fruitfully consult "Old Moore's Almanac" or their favourite astrologer.

We have had a sizeable slump in textiles after the Labour Government had for years been pressing for expansion and more production. Back in 1946 when a new clothing factory was opened at Leeds Miss Ann Loughlin of the Garment Workers Union told the workers at the opening ceremony, "They should be able to capture the world market in women's wear." According to the report in the *Yorkshire Evening Post* (30th September, 1946) she was also responsible for prophesying "a great future for the Leeds clothing industry." Two years later Mr. Herbert Morrison had a similar story to tell about the cotton industry:—

"Mr. Morrison dismissed as a ghost from the past Lancashire's fear that slump must follow boom, the fear

that the cotton people might 'work themselves out of a job'... For years to come, the home market alone could probably absorb all that Lancashire turned out last year".

(*Sunday Despatch* 18th April, 1948)

Later on, when the slump that was not to be had happened, the same newspaper's City Editor added his nonsensical contribution. Reporting that the "textile slump is ending" he added the bright remark that that slump was started by Dr. Dalton! (*Sunday Despatch* 26/10/52). As if a textile slump that was world-wide could be explained by a speech in which Dalton urged British housewives to hang back for lower prices!

The same story can be told of the motor manufacturers, who likewise were encouraged by the Labour government to expand production, only to find that many of their foreign markets suddenly dried up.

The *Sunday Express* (24 August, 1952) published the following:—

"Down at Dagenham Ford's plan to bring into use a factory extension totalling a third of a million square feet. Only a year ago any motor company would have put out the flags for such a big increase in the size of the works. Now conditions are very different. Even mighty Ford's must wonder whether this space will be profitably employed in the future."

Usually the capitalist writers take the line that slumps will not happen, but when they prophesy the opposite they are still only guessing and can be just as wide of the mark. The *Daily Express* of 11 May, 1949, under the heading "Cold Wind Rising," gloomily surveyed the serious unemployment in America and the rising tide in Italy, Belgium and other countries and reached the conclusion: "Depression is now upon us, and it will creep over the world." This was, however, followed by the paragraph:—

"But of course, the future does not hold any terrors. Wise counsels will prevail in many of the Western countries and there will not be a serious dislocation of commerce and industry such as occurred in 1929."

It looked as if a cautious editor, remembering that on 23 September, 1946, his City Editor had wrongly forecast a world depression similar to that of 1920-21, decided to back both horses, "creeping depression" and "no serious dislocation," sure that one must win.

The attempts of the leading British newspapers to peer into the future after the election of Eisenhower has been particularly revealing of their inability to foretell how capitalism will behave.

On 22 November, 1952, the *Financial Times* tried to sum up "The Outlook For American Business" and produced the following gem of indecision and uncertainty:—

"The impression that the outlook for American business is something between fair (but not set fair) and settled (but not for long) is confirmed if one looks away from Wall Street itself to the more general business indicators."

The same day the *Times*' City Editor had a go, and delivered himself of this, about the prospect in Britain:—

"But as yet there is some doubt whether the current phase of recovery is a temporary interruption of a long-term declining trend which started after the Korean boom broke or whether the recession of 1951-52 was a temporary interruption of an expanding trend which started immediately after the war."

Is our escalator going up or going down?

The next day (23 November) the *Sunday Times*' City Editor wrote on "Averting A Slump" but could not make up his mind whether or not there is a slump that needs averting:—

"It would be premature to suggest that all this evidence points conclusively to an approaching world depression. On the contrary there are at the moment signs of a recovery, which may last at least until next Spring."

He pinned his hope for recovery till the Spring, on rearmament and "the lack of a general atmosphere of peace."

A month earlier Mr. Cyril Osborne, Conservative M.P. for Louth, made a speech putting into plain English the fears many capitalists have that peace may mean calamity for their business.

"Speaking at Louth yesterday Mr. Cyril Osborne, M.P., said if Marshal Stalin was to accept an invitation to the Coronation, or if the Korean war were to end, there would be a dreadful fall in commodity prices. Unless we made plans in conjunction with America to deal with the problems that must arise when the fighting ended, there would be the greatest slump the capitalist system

had ever known."

(*Observer*, 26 October, 1952)

To wind up here are two current forecasts of the trade future in America.

The "Economist" (6 December, 1952) writes:—

"... a slight recession, of the type experienced in 1949, is possible, and even probable, by the late spring without any cut in government expenditure, and it would have come whichever party had won the election... Private investment at the moment is at an annual rate of about \$50 billion... it may be running at a rate \$8 to \$10 billion lower by the summer and there may be between four and five million unemployed by that time."

The second is a forecast of the American National Planning Association, reported under the heading "U.S. Jobs Safe for 10 Years" in the *Sunday Express* (14 December):—

"The United States is likely to maintain a high-employment economy during the next decade, with a steady rise in productivity, and living standards..."

You may take your choice of these, but if you are wise you will concentrate on getting rid of capitalism in order to establish Socialism.

REACHING FOR THE MOON

FANTASTIC though it may sound, a question has arisen regarding the ownership of the moon. Sooner or later it was bound to happen in a world dedicated to the idol of private ownership.

On 27th November, 1952, Nancy Spain writing in the *Daily Express* brings to our notice an American book, written by various authors entitled "Across the Space Frontier." (Sidgwick and Jackson, 21/-.) One of the authors is Dr. Wernher van Braun, co-designer of the V2 Rocket and now technical director of the Army Ordnance Guided Missile Development Group, Alabama. We learn that a detailed plan has been drawn up for a Space Station and space travel. If the money were available and work put in hand at once it could be ready within 10 to 15 years. In fact, the American rocket engineers and scientists deem this project a number one priority. They say it is essential that the United States should be first in this field because a "less peaceably-minded" nation may beat them to it. (According to the Editor, Cornelius Ryan, the Russians have admitted that their engineers are also working along these lines.) The project is planned right down to the smallest detail and involves the building of a station 1,075 miles into space, where the gravitational pull of the earth will hold the ship on a circular course around the earth, like a second moon. This station would be the launching site for trips to the moon and back in 10 days. A journey to Mars would take 2½ years return. It is pointed out that great strides would be made in our knowledge of the stars, cosmic radiation and the structure of the earth, also that weather could be correctly predicted for months ahead. The emphasis, however, seems to be on the military value of the Space Station. It is said "In the hands of a ruthless power, no part of the earth would be safe from attack by guided missiles. No troop, air, or sea movements could be hidden from the all-seeing eye of the Station's telescopes."

Oscar Schacter, Deputy Director of the Legal

Department of U.N.O., endeavours to answer the question "Who does the Moon belong to?" He says that the first men to land on the moon could "legally claim it in the name of their mother country, provided they could prove that country capable of the intention and will to act as sovereign and shew some actual exercise or display of such authority." (*Daily Express*, 27-11-52.) Nancy Spain is "mildly disquieted" at the thought that German scientists may be first to land on the moon. According to the *Sunday Express* (30th November, 1952) the current issue of the Moscow magazine "Ogonek" says that the Russian flag will be raised on the moon within the next 50 years. Also that "Russian-made artificial moons marked with the Red Star will circle the earth 16 times every 24 hours. He (the writer) foresees a Soviet victory in the race to the moon and predicts that rocket-powered Russian space ships will get there in five days."

We can't help feeling that the famous crusading spirit of Lord Beaverbrook and his trusty henchmen has been caught napping in this connection. On the first day of the conference of Commonwealth Prime Ministers, the leading article of the *Daily Express* bleats for unity and prays that the British Empire may not be allowed to die. What a shot in the arm for that ailing and failing father of imperialist conquests if the moon were gathered into the fold. Visualise the boundless possibilities. One could almost float a company on the strength of it.

Schacter, however, goes on to say "might should not be right" and the outer space and all celestial bodies in it should be at the disposal of "all mankind over which no nation would be permitted to exercise domination."

The whole thing sounds like a Jules Verne fabrication and although we have no means of knowing just how or when practice can take the place of theory,

(continued on page 15)

CUSTOM—AND POWER

Homo sapiens, thinking man, has been on the earth for at least fifty thousand years, probably many more. Organically he has scarcely changed during this period—he is today substantially the same physical animal as he was at the beginning of it. Yet for the greater part he remained a savage, eking out a precarious existence. Only during the past five or six thousand years has he developed some measure of civilised organisation. Our own modern civilisation has risen out of barbarism in the course of a few centuries.

If we were able to stand in a queue of generations with primitive man at its head we would tail some three miles behind him. Walking up the queue two or three paces we would pass people who could hardly have appreciated history as a process and who knew nothing of biological evolution. Ten paces up, scientific experiment was in its infancy; a hundred paces and beyond for the rest of the three miles we would be in pre-civilised times. This gives us some idea of the gathering momentum of man's development. It shows us in broad outline the way in which social knowledge has evolved, but it also poses the question: to what extent are all our ideas influenced by the dead weight of the past?

Custom-Thinking

Just as biological evolution took many thousands of years to change the brain of the highest brute imperceptibly into that of earliest man, so cultural evolution has operated slowly but inexorably over similar periods. Sub-man, man in the making, who fought other animals for survival, emerged successful because he was a little, but only a very little, more intelligent than they. By virtue of being just one step ahead mentally of his rivals his further evolution was assured. But this is not to say that primitive man formed correct opinions about the phenomena of the real world, their causes and effects. He did not think at all unless driven by the direst need, and then not a step beyond immediate circumstances.

People are still living today in ever-dwindling parts of the world that civilisation has left unchanged. When they are asked why they eat, fish, hunt, or make things in the way they do, they usually answer "it is done thus." As an example, we may take the small Mexican town of Patzcuaro, where U.N.E.S.C.O. workers showed the women that cooking on a raised hearth is more hygienic and less toilsome than preparing the family meal on the floor. The comment of one student, on the way people learn to change their customs, is interesting. "We never try to do things for them. All we try is to show them what they should do and how they can do it. Once they have seen how they can solve their problems, they usually set about the job in their own way."

Such people live in a form of society that was once the general rule, when every act and idea was subject to the unchallenged authority of custom. Custom-thinking was maintained by the society in which it ruled, and served in turn to maintain that organisation. This state of affairs continued until the first civilised states were established, in which the tribe, as the social unit, was completely broken up and

replaced by the private family. Class society had been brought into being, and with it another obstacle even more formidable than that of custom.

Power-Thinking

When men themselves are the instruments of the holder of power, his supreme consideration is to maintain and increase his invaluable asset. There are many ways in which this power may be held or delegated—through physical force, the concept of leadership, divine authority, private or state property. All these forms have one basic idea in common, that of preserving and enhancing the power.

With custom-thinking, individual interest and herd interest are identical. But as soon as primitive equality is broken up there arises a differentiation of interests between power holders and those over whom the power is held. It is not the facts of the environment, the weapons and tools which have to be discovered and used, but men, men's minds. The criterion of every judgment, value and thought becomes its relation to the situation of power and authority. It is not a question of the good or bad intentions of the power holder; whether he is benevolent or malevolent so long as he holds power he is completely unable to avoid thinking in terms of it.

Power-thinking is a law unto itself, that disregards scientific facts which contradict it. Dogmatic assertions by "authorities" are made for the benefit of those whose interpretation of facts might otherwise lead to dangerous thoughts—dangerous, that is, to the stability of the system. If a slight adjustment (or even a gross distortion) of the truth conduces to sound and wholesome public opinion, so much the better. An outstanding instance of this is that two world wars have perfected the art of wholesale, barefaced lying to the point where another war can almost be made out to be an outbreak of peace.

Beginning usually as a deliberate, falsifying action, power-thinking rapidly becomes spontaneous and automatic. The element of fraud is not necessarily decisive—it is the mechanism of thought itself that is poisoned. Within its orbit every fact and judgment is distorted, every point of view and issue prejudiced. The vocabulary of power-thinkers betrays the falsified mental worlds in which they live. Different words, with approving and disapproving connotations, are used to describe the same event or condition, according to whether it is "ours" or "theirs." A recent example from America is that "character assassination" in one camp is "exposing graft" in another.

The primary object of power-thinking is to influence not the minds of the power holders but those of the subject class. They must be made to see the advantages, the reasonableness, the necessity of the existing social order, and the undesirability of any view out of harmony with it. It is difficult to imagine a king who opposes the monarchical institution, a Pope who disbelieves in God, or a leader who thinks he is no better than those he leads. But in actual fact the power situation would not be altered if they *did* all think in these ways, provided that their subjects con-

tinued to give them loyalty and devotion.

Class society has been so permeated with power-thinking that even most of those who appear to attack it are unable to free themselves from its influence. The classic case of this is the Communist Party, which seeks, through intellectual minority action, to establish a Dictatorship of the Proletariat, and promises that classless society will eventually follow. In the countries where the Communist Party has risen to power the rank and file must wait in vain for any sign of a disturbance in the relationship of power between themselves and their masters.

It is a false distinction to think that power can be sometimes deliberately abused and at other times used to serve humanity as a whole. The best intentions of power holders are unavoidably perverted by the way they must exercise it. When they lie, cheat, steal or murder by remote control they never confess that it is their wickedness that leads them to act in that way—rather, they are spurred on to greater sacrifices (of others) by a noble and righteous conception of their public duty. And if the tyranny of individuals has been great, then that of a class is far greater, since the power at its command is less at the mercy of personal frailty and is therefore, in the full sense of the word, more monstrous.

Modern Tendencies

It is scarcely possible to compare the incubus of primitive custom-thinking with any modern attempt to stifle thought. However, it must not be imagined that society today has entirely outgrown custom-thinking. When you tell a worker in 1953 that an alternative

social system is possible, he does not usually raise his hands in pious horror at the suggestion. He does not believe he has to go to work for an employer because all work "is done thus." His homage to custom is much more subtle—he "knows Socialism will never work because . . ." His conformity is more conscious since, when pressed, he gives reasons for rejecting change. These reasons are the propaganda for Capitalism and they tell him, in a thousand different ways, that he must voluntarily accept the things he is supposed to be unable to change.

The same modifying tendency may be noticed in the modern version of power-thinking which has, under pressure from working class movements and the exigencies of the capitalist system itself, become liberalised. It is less nakedly arrogant than it was even a few decades ago. "Freedom," "reform," and "enlightenment" are on the lips of every politician; the capitalists have learned that a better way to retain power is to advocate reforms instead of resisting them.

Such is the background to the problem that faces socialists—the problem of changing the ideas of people throughout the world in order that a social system may be instituted that will enable mankind, in Marx's words, to make truly human history. It might appear from the foregoing that the obstacles to the achievement of this are great, our opponents would say insuperable. But remember Patzcuaro—"once they have seen how they can solve their problems, they usually set about the job in their own way." In a further article we shall explain the significance of the part that rational thinking plays in the growth of socialist ideas.

S.R.P.

EASY MONEY?

MUCH is made today through the various mediums of capitalist propaganda of the alleged opportunities that people have of making "easy money." It would appear that one of the worst calamities to beset a person today is to "scoop the pool" and therefore be forced to accept the worries and responsibilities that weigh so heavily upon the wealthy.

According to recent comments made by speakers on the radio the "new rich" produced by football pools, sweepstakes and lotteries, lose their "strength of character," their "sense of values" and that noble quality of diligence evaporates into lethargy. One speaker went even further and showed (with his tongue in his cheek?) concern over the millions that regularly lose money in these doubtful speculations. He considered that the majority of people who indulged in a "little flutter" could ill-afford the few shillings required to support their "fancies" and suggested that their hard-earned cash be spent in a more useful way. Altruistic as his motives may have been, whilst he appears sympathetic to the unsuccessful and hints that here lies one of the reasons of their poverty he completely overlooks the root cause of this condition, i.e., the present wages system based upon exploitation.

Now let us return to those who find themselves suddenly saddled with riches. "Easy money," a spokesman of the church recently declared in a broad-

cast sermon "is that sort of money acquired by people requiring little or no effort to obtain it."

However when we examine this a little more closely we are astonished to discover that successful punters are not the only people to "suffer" the benefits of easy money. In the early days of capitalism members of the ruling class generally played an active part in organising and administering their business. Today, however, the ruling class is largely an investing body and have little or nothing to do once their capital is invested. A classical example of this of course is demonstrated in the state controlled or nationalised industries where people possess government bonds or gilt-edged security and receive regular and guaranteed returns, e.g. £30,000,000 paid per annum to Government bond holders who prior to nationalisation of the railways were holders of private shares in that industry. As yet nothing has been mentioned by these speakers about the "soul-destroying" qualities of money thus obtained, yet what is easier. This money is the fruit of unpaid labour and springs from the exploitation of one class by another. We of the S.P.G.B. hold only one view of this system. Whether the acquisition of money is easy or hard it is merely the result brought about by the existence of a system of society where riches are enjoyed by a privileged minority whilst the overwhelming majority are condemned to this quagmire of poverty and nagging anxiety. There is another

aspect to this questionable past-time. It has been stated "religion is the opium of the people" and that "religion acts as a pillar to private property systems." If religion is a pillar giving support to this capitalist system then the pools, lotteries and sweepstakes act as struts. What a valuable red herring they supply for the staunch defenders of capitalism. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast" is a time-worn expression but in this case how true. Instead of workers concentrating their attention on the abolition of the system which keeps them in ever increasing poverty, they seek

their solution and riches via largely futile endeavours in a "bob each way."

Only when workers of the world understand the cause of their poverty and other social problems which find their roots buried in this present social order will they unite in a firm resolve to abolish capitalism and establish a system of society where men, women and children regardless of sex, race or colour will stand in equal relationship to the means of wealth production creating wealth for use instead of for sale and profit.

N.J.H.

THE CO-OPERATIVE MOVEMENT

A Study in Failure

YET another organisation paying lip-service to the ideas of Socialism is the Co-operative movement. Like the Labour Party, with which it has been closely associated for many years, it confuses nationalisation with Socialism, debasing the word still further, however, by extending it to cover all its excursions into the sphere of retail shopkeeping. Not surprisingly, its ideas about Socialism are even vaguer and more confused than those of the Labour Party.

The Co-operative movement, far from having anything to do with Socialism, is in fact nothing but a large-scale trading company operating within Capitalism. It makes its way and pays its way according to the economic dictates of the system, and treats its workers no differently than the workers are treated in other similar concerns. In the words of one of its own closest sympathisers, Mr. G. D. H. Cole,

"The Co-operatives will work alongside Capitalism, but will do nothing to end it."
(The World of Labour.)

The Early Days

Co-operative literature still points with pride to the efforts of Robert Owen in the sphere of co-operation, as though his ideas on the subject had anything in common with the Co-operative movement of today.

Owen lived in an age when production by machinery was first making its brutal way in the factories—an era of fantastic profits for the factory-owners and terrible suffering for the workers. He saw that the workers were helplessly enslaved to those who owned the land and factories, and thought he had found a way out by securing for them land and machinery which they could work for themselves. The workers at that time were without votes and unorganised, and it was unthinkable to Owen that they could hope to obtain possession of the wealth of the country against the opposition of the owners. The solution he proposed was that small groups of workers should try to establish "villages of industry," self-supporting and without employers; these settlements would form, as it were, little oases in a desert of Capitalism, in which the land and means of production would be owned in common. This movement, he believed, would grow and grow until the workers finally achieved their emancipation.

To obtain money to buy land and machinery required, he proposed the setting-up of "union-shops," which would buy goods at wholesale prices and sell them to members retail. The difference—which in the ordinary way would have gone into the pockets of

private shopkeepers—would be used to set up the "villages of industry." Between 1825 and 1834, some four or five hundred of these "union-shops" were started but the movement was a complete failure, due partly to loss of enthusiasm and partly to actual financial loss since the law did not provide protection for their funds.

One such store was formed in Brighton in 1826, and the Co-operative Year Book published one hundred years later makes the suggestion that that year ought really to be regarded as the beginning of the modern Co-operative movement. The writer adds, however, that even in the very early days of the "union shops" the pioneer co-operators at Brighton and elsewhere had lost interest in Owen's more ambitious schemes for reorganising the social system. He also makes the significant remark that "the schemes of Owen were as much unlike the aims of the first co-operative society as chalk is unlike cheese."

The Present Day

Although these early shops did not prosper, later efforts—beginning at Rochdale in 1844—were successful. Different again from the "union shops," they were based on the idea of returning a "dividend" to the purchaser, calculated on the amount of the purchase. These retail societies have spread all over the country until their membership is now more than 10 million, and their retail sales (1951) more than £600 million. They employ something like three hundred thousand workers, and their share capital in 1950 amounted to £230 million.

These figures, though they appear impressive, serve only to underline our contention that the Co-operative movement, far from having anything remotely to do with Socialism, is essentially a capitalist business competing with other businesses. Even its sales figures, large though they are, are no larger than the sales—to take only one example—of a big capitalist firm like Unilever, Ltd., whose turnover in 1950 totalled almost £1,000 million. And even within the capitalist sphere, it is having to fight every inch of the way to hold its own, as its spokesmen themselves realise.

"Before the war the Co-op. handled about a quarter of the milk, 27 per cent. of the sugar and preserves, 18 per cent. of the remaining grocery trade, 14 per cent. of the coal, 9 per cent. of the boots and shoes, 6½ per cent. of the clothing, 3½ per cent. of the hardware . . . The Consumers' Co-operative Movement, regarded purely as a trading concern, was in effect a gigantic grocery, baking, dairying, and meat and coal supplying business, with con-

siderable clothing departments annexed to it, and not a great deal beside."

("A Century of Co-operation," G. H. D. Cole. Page 377.)

And a contributor to the 1950 Co-operators' Year Book is even more pessimistic,

"In fact if we have not suffered a recession, at the most Co-operative retail trade has remained static in relation to retail trade as a whole."

(Page 47.)

As for the £230 million share and loan capital recorded in 1950, it is negligible compared to the total wealth of the capitalists, which runs into thousands of millions. Even this small share capital, it should be mentioned, has been declining in recent years and has been causing increasing concern.

The large profits of the Co-operative societies are like all profits, the proceeds of the exploitation of the workers. In 1946, for example, the average pay of the whole staff for the twelve months ranged from between £195 for distributive and transport workers to £225 for those in production and service. The profits of £44 million for the same year, if distributed evenly amongst them all, would have approximately doubled their wages. A large proportion of these profits are pocketed by members as dividend, but fairly substantial amounts are also paid out as interest on shares and loans.

The Co-ops. have, of course, always made great play of the dividends they pay their members, but even here they have been compelled to make cuts in recent years. According to the *Manchester Guardian* (11th February, 1952),

"In 1942 the average dividend paid by all co-operative retail societies was 1s. 10½d. in the pound. By 1949 it had fallen to 1s. 4½d., and the downward trend continues, so much so that one small society—Leeswood—now pays no dividend at all, although a year ago it was paying 1s. 2d. Blackley (Manchester) Society now pays only a 2d. dividend, 7d. less than a year ago; Eastleigh and Aldershot pay 4d., and Loughborough, Sheringham, and Winchester 5d."

Far from influencing the course of Capitalism, it is obvious that it is Capitalism that is in command, and the Co-ops., in common with other retail businesses in these days of economic uncertainty, have to do the best they can to maintain their position. In such circumstances, "dividends" to purchasers have to go by the board.

Relations with the Workers

The Co-operative societies have also failed, as they were bound to fail, to solve the problem of the relationship between themselves and their own workers. Time after time there have been strikes and lock-outs in Co-operative concerns, and on occasions they have even been reduced to calling in the Minister of Labour in a capitalist Government to settle their disputes. Mr. Percy Redfern, in his book "A New History of the C.W.S.", published on their behalf, is quite frank on the subject,

"Preceding pages have shown how . . . the C.W.S. consistently has stood out against special wages costs to the Society, which, however popular with workers and their friends, and therefore apparently rich in advertisement, nevertheless would have blocked the way to serving great numbers of consumers."

(Page 508-9.)

And later,

"Perhaps the struggles of the past (never profoundly bitter) have left the Society paying more here and there than managements think a business requiring to grow ought to be called upon to bear, and less in other places than trade union officials say the Society could stand."

The struggle is still going on. Early in 1950, the unions catering for Co-operative society workers tried to persuade the Co-operative Wages Board to approve an incentive bonus scheme. This was rejected by the Board, and the unions, in their own words,

"... were left with no alternative but to seek improvements in the national wage rates which would meet the reasonable demands of the unions' members."
(*Manchester Guardian*, 29th March, 1950.)

A few months later, general wage increases were announced for all the workers on the retail side.

Less than two years after this, the unions were again agitating for further wage increases, and the resistance to them was just as hard. According to a report in the *Manchester Guardian* (8th February, 1952), Mr. Frank Jones, the Co-op's labour adviser, stated that

"A lot of societies would find themselves unable to pay such increases or, indeed, any increases without passing the effects straight on to the consumer and so making themselves uncompetitive."

And later, talking like any other capitalist employer in the same circumstances,

"It is very near time to call a halt to practically all wage and salary increases."

So much for the benefits of the Co-operative movement for its employees.

Relations with the Labour Party

Even as a trading concern, the Co-operative movement has had to recognise that its possibilities are limited. The recognition of this weakness drove it to enter politics in order to secure and maintain by that means what it could not achieve in the ordinary rough and tumble of capitalist trading. The formation of the Co-operative Political Party was nothing less than an admission that it could not hold its own against its trade rivals, let alone make inroads into the capitalist system, supposing they had that in mind.

Right from the beginning, the Co-operative Political Party worked closely with the Labour Party. While the Labour Party was in opposition and had a free hand to defend the claims of the Co-operators in such matters as taxation, the partnership worked fairly smoothly. But with the advent of a Labour Government, trouble developed between them on several issues.

First the Labour Government upset the Co-operative Society leaders by the threat to nationalise the Co-operative Insurance Society along with the rest of the insurance industry. On this, *Reynolds News*, the Co-operative Sunday paper, in an editorial (30-10-49) commented as follows:—

"... We think it is neither good Socialism nor good sense to absorb the Co-operative system in a State scheme, as Labour proposes to do. A strong case can be made for leaving the Co-operative and State systems to function side by side, to the benefit of the community."

The Co-operative movement is of course no more concerned with Socialism than is the Labour Party. What it is really troubled about is that if the Co-operative Insurance Society is nationalised it would be a bad stroke of business for the Co-operative movement. A writer in "Co-operative News" (20th October, quoted in the *Manchester Guardian*, 21-10-1949) had no scruples about admitting this. Said he—"Our own 'private enterprise' in this sphere of investment and activity has been a good money-maker." Like the ordinary capitalist industrialist and trader, what the Co-operatives are concerned with is profits.

The second row between the Labour Party and the Co-operatives started with a speech by a Labour Peer, Lord Shepherd, that the Government might in certain circumstances set up State retail shops—a threat to the Co-operatives as well as to private traders. Mr. Strachey, then Minister of Food, hastened to soothe the Co-operatives' feelings, but the harm was done. According to the "Co-operative News" the threat had caused "consternation in high-up Co-operative circles" (*Manchester Guardian*, 14th October, 1949).

Not unnaturally, since then the Liberals and Tories have hastened to intervene and assure the Co-operatives that they, and not the Labour Party, are their real friends. Lord Woolton, for example, assured them that

they would be safer under Tory Government (*Sunday Express*, 30-10-1949), while a prominent Liberal, Mr. Arthur Seldon, writing in "Co-operative News" (27th October, 1949) implored his readers to desert the Labour Party for Liberalism.

We can leave the Co-operative movement to do what it will with the blandishments of all three—Tories, Liberals and Labourites. We merely repeat what we said at the beginning of this article. The Co-operative movement is essentially a large-scale trading concern operating within Capitalism, making its way and paying its way according to the economic dictates of the system. It has nothing to do with Socialism. H.

CHARLES LESTER

A Biographical Note

FIRST met Charlie Lester over thirty years ago. I was still a kid, he was a mature and impressive man. His effect on the eager audiences of the post 1914-18 war was electric.

He had just arrived in this country after twenty years in Canada and the U.S.A. His Canadian style, accent and rig made him remarkable enough; his address to the large audiences of unemployed ex-servicemen was extraordinary. When most of the I.L.P. and Communist "Unemployed organisers" devoted their attention to personal invective against individual ministers; or the usual temporary nostrums for increase of the dole, or (much more) prevention of its decrease, Lester never failed, in my hearing, at least, to go straight to the root of the matter.

He just could not speak to an audience without dealing with the capitalist system. From that day to this, I have never wavered in the opinion that of all the speakers I have ever heard, Lester, in those days, was out on his own as a powerful exponent of Marxian economics in a popular trenchant style.

In clipped and rugged American terms, without a word wasted, he would grip a large audience from the first phrase and proceed to build up a rigorously logical exposition of surplus value.

"There's no sentiment in Business," "that profit is wrung out of the hides and carcasses of the working-class," "those wages amount to just enough fried fish, chips and beer to keep you working."

These and similar phrases were as typical of Charlie Lester as the shock of hair, the bushy eyebrows covering the twinkling eyes, and the missing index finger on the waving hand. Tanned by the prairie suns and the Yukon snows, as at home in Frisco or Winnipeg as in Stepney or Hyde Park, he was a modern cosmopolite, a man of all countries and all trades.

"I'm the laziest cuss under the sun," he would blandly inform his audiences, omitting to mention his jobs as gold-miner, farm-hand, Blacksmith, printer and Editor of the largest Trade Union paper in Canada. Many will remember his broadcast in the B.B.C. programme of his part, as the cook-who-could-not-cook in the record drive of many thousand head of cattle to Chicago from the West.

For many years I lost touch, but immediately remade his acquaintance on joining the S.P.G.B. in

1939. Much water had flown under the Bridge, the years were beginning to take their toll. In the bitter weather of 1941 it was Charles Lester who attended regularly at the Gloucester Place office of the Party, in a Balaclava hat, sometimes with frost on his eyebrows, to give instruction and counsel to young members in between air raid warnings. Subsequently I read through the minutes of those talks which covered a wide field of History, Economics and Current Affairs. Those fortunate enough to attend obtained a practical background of knowledge which affected their whole lives.

In 1945, the post of full-time propagandist fell vacant. At an age when most men ask nothing more than their carpet-slippers Lester applied and was appointed. As Central organiser of the Party at the time, I went over to see him in N.E. London, and made sure, as it was snowing heavily, that he had some reasonably warm equipment for the bitter trip to Glasgow that night.

He invited me to spend the day there, which passed discussing International politics, the Peace, Education, music and Omar Khayyam.

The years passed rapidly by, and many were the demands of the Party on Lester's services. I cannot recall one occasion when these were refused or denied. Whether the meeting was large or small, far or near, early or late, he accepted as a matter of course.

As time marched on, it became apparent that even a man as vigorous, tough and energetic as Charlie Lester could not beat Anno Domini indefinitely. Still the indomitable spirit refused to give up. In weather when he should have been indoors at home, he was regularly at Lincoln's Inn and Tower Hill. The once powerful and strident tones which would ring out like a blast across a large audience, were sinking into an almost inaudible whisper.

Never did his sense of humour desert him, his remarks were now often punctuated by a quiet chuckle. He tended, in later years, to an exaggerated optimism with regard to Socialism which other well-known Socialist speakers have also expressed.

During the Party's tenure of Rugby Chambers he once remarked to me "When you've stopped learning, you've stopped living." Surely that explains the astounding tenacity with which he stuck to his efforts as a Socialist propagandist, for so long.

He was always anxious and ready to try and learn. He had the Socialist's humility to knowledge. A busy life-time of effort on behalf of Socialism has assured for him the only sort of immortality which Socialists know, a permanent place in the memories of his fellow-warriors against Ignorance for Happiness.

HORATIO.

CORRECTION

In last month's "SOCIALIST STANDARD" page 181, second column, last two lines, the writer of the article "Progress and Culture" attributes the pinching of Peru to Columbus instead of Francisco Pizarro. The writer has duly attired himself in sackcloth and ashes.

REACHING FOR THE MOON—continued from page 9.

there is no doubt that a vast amount of planning has been done in America, and it is definitely asserted that "there are no over-ruling problems that cannot be overcome." The sum required for the project is £1,400,000,000, and it is pointed out that this huge amount of money is less than one quarter of the price of arms ordered by United States in the last half of 1951.

Our political opponents from time to time call us "impossibilists" and say we are reaching for the moon, but we offer the only workable solution for a world riven by conflict. Within a generation or two, this conflict may be extended into the depths of space if the highwayman of private ownership is still in the saddle.

So hurry up chums and spread the light before someone hatches out the bright idea of picking us off in thousands with a "death ray" from the moon.

F.M.R.

HACKNEY LECTURES

at Bethnal Green Library, Cambridge Heath Road,
(Facing Tube Station)
Fridays at 8 p.m.

- Jan. 9th "The Industrial Revolution"—E. Kersley.
- " 16th "Socialism and Psychology"—E. Willmott.
- " 23rd "The Materialist Conception of History and Literature"—R. Coster.
- " 30th "Muddling Through"—C. May.
- Feb. 6th "Production & Overproduction"—E. Hardy.

DEBATE

With the Richmond Methodist College at
The Richmond Community Centre, Sheen Road,
(Near Richmond Station)

on January 26th at 7.30 p.m.

Subject: "That Christianity can never solve the problems of Society."

FORUM AT HEAD OFFICE

Saturday, 10th January, at 7 p.m.

"Is our Approach to Propaganda Outdated?"
Panel to be announced.

HEAD OFFICE SUNDAY MEETINGS

at 7.30 p.m.

January 11th—"Division of Labour under Socialism"—A. Turner.

January 25th—"Capitalism and Medicine"—H. Jarvis.

PUBLIC MEETINGS at

The Co-op. Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road
(3 minutes from Finsbury Park Tube Station).

Thursday, 8th January, 8 p.m.

"The Gods of Men"—R. Ambridge.

Thursday, 29th January, 8 p.m.

"Marriage, Morality and Free Love"—Lisa Bryan.

Questions and Discussion.

WEST HAM BRANCH LECTURES

at Salisbury Road School, Manor Park Broadway, E.12
(Near "Earl of Essex").

Thursdays at 8 p.m.

1st January, "Socialism—Utopian and Scientific"—

H. Waite.

15th January, "Backward Countries"—Branch Forum
with A. Turner and three Branch members to be
appointed.

29th January, "The Geography of Hunger"—

J. D'Arcy.

LEWISHAM BRANCH LECTURES

Mondays at 8 p.m. at

Room 1, Co-op. Hall, Davenport Road, Rushey Green,
Catford, S.E.6.

13th January, "Socialism and Psychology"—

E. Willmott.

27th January, "After the Revolution—What?"—

J. Trotman.

BLOOMSBURY DISCUSSION

at North Room, Conway Hall, Red Lion Square,
at 8.30 p.m.

Thursday, 1st January, "Post War Politics"—W. Kerr.

Thursday, 22nd January, To be announced.

GLASGOW CITY AND KELVINGROVE

MEETING at

Central Halls (Room 7),
50, Bath Street, Glasgow.

Sunday, January 18th, at 7.30 p.m.

"Socialism—Utopia or Science."

Speaker—T. Mulheron.

Admission Free.

Questions.

TO ALL PARTY MEMBERS

"SOCIALISM AND BACKWARD COUNTRIES"

A meeting of Party members will be held to discuss
this subject at Head Office on Sunday, 22nd February,
1953, at 3 p.m.

A meeting of Party Members will be held at Head
Office on Sunday, 18th Jan. at 3 p.m. to discuss Electoral
activity in accordance with Rule 26.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month at 7.15 p.m., at Kingsley Hall, Old Market Street, Bristol. Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Greta Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

NOTTINGHAM.—Meets 1st and 3rd Wednesday in each month at The Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham at 7.45 p.m. Sec.: J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 14th and 28th Jan., 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

RUGBY.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in each month at Co-op Club, "Oakfield", Bilton Road, at 7.30 p.m. Correspondence to C. Walsh, 76 Railway Terrace, Rugby.

SWANSEA.—D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T. U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, 86, Estcourt Rd., Watford, Herts.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES.

Socialist Party of Australia, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia

Socialist Party of Canada, P.O. Box 751, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Socialist Party of Ireland, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire. Sec. c/o. 29 Lincoln Ave., Belfast, N. Ireland.

Socialist Party of New Zealand, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

World Socialist Party of the United States, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

Branch Meetings—continued

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingwood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hildard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.15.

Wickford meets Thursdays at 7.30 p.m. at St. Edmonds', Runwell Road, Wickford. Secretary J. R. Skilliter—same address.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at Digbeth Institute. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. First and third Thursdays in Jan. (1st and 22nd), Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. C. Phillips, 4 Lowell House, Sultan Terrace, S.E.3.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 55, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 a.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Kenfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Aikhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, Jan. 12th and 26th at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to R. Russell, 401, St. Vincent Street, Glasgow, C.3

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to M. Temple, 74 Gore Rd., Hackney, E.9

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to Secretary, at above address.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thursdays, 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. D. Courtney, 53 Cannonbury Park South, N.1.

Kingston-on-Thames Sec. 446, Staines Road, Twickenham. Branch meets Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at the above address. Tel. Feltham 4006.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets Tuesdays, 13th and 27th January, at 7.45 p.m., Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate. Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2, (nr. "Met" Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180 Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6

Palmer's Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 582 Vol. 49 Feb., 1953

The Struggle for Power in Russia

LABOUR'S LOST ILLUSIONS

THE OPERATIONS IN NORWAY

RATIONAL THINKING

THE ERRORS OF STALIN

ABOUT BOOKS

CUSTOM AND POWER

SLINGS AND ARROWS

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

SINCE THE ARREST of nine doctors, most of them Jewish, on charges of murder and attempted murder of Russian military and civil leaders at the instigation of foreign governments and the Zionist movement, political commentators in the Western countries have been busy trying to guess what are the hidden forces and personal ambitions that will explain why the Russian Government chose to expose itself to publicity that must gravely damage its prestige and embarrass its Communist supporters in other countries. While the explanations vary and are often contradictory they almost all agree in refusing to accept the validity of the charges and the prisoners' "confessions." Most of them start off with the crippling defect of assuming that Communism exists in Russia and that the Russian Government's actions are dictated by interest in furthering Communist ideas. President Truman carried this kind of examination to its logical extreme by interpreting the trial as a sign of Russian weakness, due, he said, to "a fatal flaw in their society. Theirs is a Godless system."

A much more objective approach was made in *Manchester Guardian* editorials (14, 16 and 17 January, 1953). Here there was a serious attempt to compare political methods and motives in Russia with those in the Western Powers. It was frankly recognised that "communism has nothing to do with the struggle" and that the concern of the Russian State "is not with communism but with power; it uses communist jargon to serve its purpose, but that purpose is the maintenance and extension of power."

Admitting that in this respect "Russia does not differ appreciably from the ordinary Western State," the writer singled out as the important difference the fact that in Russia, since there are no political parties able to fight out the struggle for office in election contests, the form it must take is that of plotting, intrigue, and the violent removal of rival claimants. Victory means power, defeat means extinction. The "*Guardian*" writer's conclusion is that whatever the present grouping of the contestants the likely outcome when Stalin dies is that the generals will move to the front of the political stage:—

"The fears and the hopes, as the life of Stalin moves to its end, may split that political structure as they have split so many before in the history of States. There will not be the authority of a Lenin or a Stalin to hold the ambitious down, nor the prestige of a Generalissimo to check the generals. The lions now under the throne will struggle for the seat on the throne. And in that struggle can the throne survive? May it not be that already the first faint shadow of anarchy and civil war is beginning to fall on Russia?"

It is an interesting speculation, but what is of more concern is to consider what sort of country Russia is that such events can take place there. As a great capitalist power in a capitalist world Russia is subject to the same kind of internal strains and external pressures as other powers; the need to keep an impoverished working class more or less content with wage-slavery; the need to accumulate capital and increase productivity in order to build up modern industry capable of serving the military and civil needs of capitalism; the need to force an unwilling peasantry into collective farms so that by increased production and government requisitions on produce the towns can be fed and manufacture supported; and of course the need to defend and expand its world position in face of the other powers. These are problems much like those of all governments, but once those in power in Russia had committed themselves to dictatorship by suppressing the Constituent Assembly because it had not a Communist majority and then suppressing all political parties except their own, there was no other way of maintaining power against internal discontents, whether in the inner circle or among the population as a whole, than that of violence and terror.

For a guide the commentators, instead of looking for explanations in current ideological disputes in Communist circles, could more profitably have looked at Russian "palace revolutions" under 17th and 18th century Czarism or at any European country a few centuries ago. In such conditions current Russian events cease to appear fantastic; everything is possible,

including plots to murder generals (almost alone the *Manchester Guardian* considers that "it would not be surprising if an attempt at medical assassination had in fact been made, from whatever motive"). Whether there ever was such a plot or whether it was the vile invention of the rulers of Russia, either way the event throws a revealing light on the savage political conditions of that country, for these accusations were made by men who know that they can count on wide masses of the population believing that such things are possible and that American-backed Zionism is responsible. So strong are the passions of rival contenders that either one group under cover of medical attention will murder its enemies or another group, those in power, will fabricate a plot and thus bring about the legal murder of innocent men as part of a political manoeuvre to discredit its rivals. This is the political system that Russia's admirers tell us is so superior to the politics of Western countries!

It should also be noted that the men who are charged have spent 35 years under Communist rule. They are men holding responsible and well-paid positions in the Soviet "Paradise" and now we must believe either that desperation drove them to political murder or that they are the innocent victims of other men's desperate ambitions. This tells us more about Russia than all the soothing accounts of unruffled progress and happiness brought back by the stream of credulous visitors, not one of whom in the past year or so has given so much as a hint of the bloody struggles for power going on behind the facade.

THE OPERATIONS IN NORWAY

The Sordid Story

It has been said that in war the first casualty is truth. This seems to presume that in peacetime truth is always hale and hearty—which it would be very difficult to prove. It is clear, however, that whatever truth suffers in time of peace, it is subjected to a redoubled assault when war breaks out.

For example, only thirteen years after the event are we being allowed to hear the truth about the invasion of Norway in 1940—so great is the respect of our rulers for our democratic rights. For of what use are democratic freedoms we do possess if we are not permitted to hear the full facts before making up our minds? The right of the British people to self-government is in practice the ability to vote for one among a number of closely similar policies every five years or so; and even this privilege becomes worthless unless we are accorded the right to full and free information on all subjects of public importance.

To return to the belated revelation of what actually happened in 1940. H.M. Stationery Office has published "The Campaign in Norway," by Dr. T. K. Derry, at 35s.; it was reviewed in *The Times* (10.12.52). The facts were that German war-industry got much of its iron-ore from the mines in north Sweden, some of which came via the Norwegian port of Narvik and some by way of the Swedish port of Lulea. Swedish iron-ore was also exported from Narvik to Britain. To cut off

these supplies to Germany was an aim of the British War Cabinet from the earliest part of the war; and when Russia attacked Finland (an act of aggression supported both then and since by the British Communists) on November 30th, 1939, the British war-leaders decided to seize the chance and send an expedition, ostensibly to "rescue Finland from the Russians." The real aim of the expedition, however, was to drag both Norway and Sweden into the war by seizing Narvik and three other Norwegian ports, plus the Swedish ore-fields and the port of Lulea, on its way to the chivalrous rescue of the Finns. When the expedition would actually have reached Finland is doubtful, for after this initial stage a large-scale campaign in southern Sweden was envisaged.

Sir Laurence Collier, the British Ambassador to Oslo after the war, wrote to *The Times* on December 17th protesting that "the early Allied plans for securing a foothold in Scandinavia by means of the Russo-Finnish War . . . never envisaged a landing in Norway without Norwegian acquiescence." His phrase is worth repeating—"Norwegian acquiescence" not "invitation." As to that, two points can be made. First, the acquiescence of countries invaded is not a new thing when the military power of the two countries concerned is greatly disproportionate. Denmark itself acquiesced in the German invasion when it came in 1940—the Danish King broadcast a message saying "it was the

duty of citizens to refrain from resistance." Hitler carried the technique a step farther; both the Austrians and the Czechs not only acquiesced in the invasions of 1938 and 1939—they both actually invited the Germans in. But British propaganda called both these operations "invasions" nevertheless. Secondly, it is noteworthy that the preparations of the British armed forces for the landings in Scandinavia were far advanced before any agreement had been made on the subject with Norway and Sweden. It seems improbable that any state engaged in total war would devote any resources to the preparation of an armed expedition unless it was certain that when the time came some kind of excuse could be thought up or manufactured.

Before preparations were completed Finland surrendered, in March 1940. Now one of the main ideas put forward by British war propaganda was that we were in the war "to defend small nations from aggression"; and the War Cabinet knew how much better it would be for the workers' morale if the Germans could be made to appear the aggressors. So when the Russo-Finnish War could no longer be used as an excuse for the plan "to secure a foothold in Scandinavia," the War Cabinet decided to lay mines in Norwegian territorial waters, to make them unsafe for the ships carrying iron-ore to Germany, in the expectation that this would provoke the Germans into an invasion of Norway; this "aggression" on the part of the enemy could then be used to justify the landing of British troops to seize the Norwegian ports on the pretext of "defending Norway from the Nazis."

Accordingly on the morning of April 8th the British and French Governments handed Notes to the Norwegian Government to the effect that they were about to lay mines in Norwegian territorial waters. The notes contained the curious theory that these mines would prevent the Germans sailing through Norwegian waters, but that Norwegian ships would not be harmed. The mines were apparently to show a strange power of selectivity in the ships they sank. The excuse given was that the Germans had been "violating neutral rights of trade." Even if they had been (and the Germans claimed that the British had been the chief offenders in this respect) it is a little difficult to follow the reasoning that because one belligerent power had violated Norway's neutrality, all the contending powers could do so. Britain was to show her sympathy with Norway over the alleged German violation of her neutrality by committing a flagrant breach of that same neutrality herself. This, at least, was the view taken by that power which was in the best position to judge—Norway. The Norwegian Government replied to the British and French Notes with a "serious and solemn protest against this open breach of international law and this violation of Norwegian neutrality and sovereignty."

On April 9th the expected happened; the Germans invaded Denmark and Norway, giving as their excuse the British and French mine-laying. So similar were the designs of the British and German Governments on Norway that, as *The Times* reviewer puts it:

"With the exception of Oslo, which had never figured in our plans, the immediate German objectives in Norway were precisely (and inevitably) the same ports whose seizure the allies had been assiduously plotting for several months."

Both Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Churchill stood up in the House of Commons and denied that the Allied action could have been the cause of the German invasion. The real reason for it was obviously the German desire to get all the Swedish iron-ore for themselves, and to prevent the export of any to Britain. But that the Allied Notes to Norway were the immediate occasion of the German invasion—as they were expected to be by the Allies—seems highly probable. When the members of the War Cabinet disclaimed in Parliament any responsibility for precipitating the show-down in Norway, which both sides had been wanting since the beginning of the war, and which the Allies at least had long been planning, they thought fit to conceal one extremely important fact: the War Cabinet had been so certain that their mine-laying would in fact bring about a German invasion that when news of it was received in this country on the morning of April 9th troops had *already* been embarked in warships for transport to Norway. Morally, there is nothing to choose between the two sides; the British and German war-leaders must share the blame. Each warring power wanted all the Scandinavian iron-ore for itself; and the British and German Governments no more considered the interests of the Norwegian people, who were bound to suffer if their country was made a theatre of modern war, than they had considered the interests of the British and German workers when they went to war in 1939.

A.W.E.

THE PASSING SHOW

True family

Amid the flood of empty sentiment which is let loose on the public at Christmas and the New Year, you may have missed this gem, which the Archbishop of Canterbury delivered in his Christmas morning address. He said:

"Wherever the Christian spirit is operative, and not least in the Churches of Africa, eastern and western, central and south, this power to bring people of diverse ways and culture into a true family of God stands out as a light in the darkness. In the daily affairs of our own national life, in the community and the community services, Christian men and women are conspicuous in providing that spirit of Christ which redeems human beings and makes them gracious."

* * *

Brotherhood of Man—Afrikaner style

Descending from the dangerous heights of vague generality to the solid ground of individual example, we must ask ourselves of whom the Archbishop was thinking. He mentioned South Africa. He may have been remembering an incident which occurred some weeks earlier in the Transvaal. There the Deputy Mayor of Pretoria North attended a civic service held by the Mayor of the neighbouring town of Springs. Soon a ghastly rumour reached the ears of the General Purposes Committee of Pretoria North: some Negroes had been present at the service! Shocked, the worthy Christians on the committee summoned the wretched Deputy Mayor before them. He humbly admitted his error, and said that he had only noticed that Negroes were present after the service had started, "when it would have been undesirable for him to leave in

protest." The Mayor of Pretoria North rounded off the affair by protesting at the presence of non-Europeans at the service; he said that had he been present "he would definitely have left the church." (*The Times*, 18-12-52)

Light in the Darkness

Perhaps the Archbishop was recollecting an incident during the past year involving two men prominent in his own diocese. One of the protagonists was Sir Waldron Smithers, an ardent Anglican, who married the daughter of an Anglican Rector, and who is reported to play the organ in his local church at Orpington in Kent. Nearby is Canterbury Cathedral, the Dean of which is Dr. Hewlett Johnson. Dr. Johnson went to China at the invitation of the authorities there, and came back alleging that the Americans in Korea had been employing germ-warfare. This annoyed supporters of the Western powers, although the United States delegate to the U.N. Disarmament Commission had expressly reserved the right of the Americans to use the atom-bomb and germ-warfare in order to "suppress aggression." But no one was more annoyed than Dr. Johnson's fellow-Anglican, Sir Waldron Smithers. Sir Waldron demonstrated his family-feeling towards the Dean by proposing in Parliament that he should be tried for high treason, and hanged—in public.

Good old days

Another Christian who drew attention to himself in 1952 was Canon Dudley Symon, of St. Michael's Convent in Middlesex. He was pondering about the Archbishop's "community services," and after a while he felt so gracious that he was unable to contain himself any longer; so he seized his pen and wrote to the *Daily Express* (3-11-52). He began sorrowfully "we are now reduced to three types of punishment only: fining, imprisonment and hanging. Even imprisonment, which used to be more varied, has been brought in these Socialistic days to a dead level." He went on nostalgically:

"Our ancestors, however, had a much greater variety at their disposal. They went in for branding, nose-slitting, ear-cropping, whipping at the cart's tail, ducking in the village pond (for the women), the pillory, the stocks; while in the 18th century there was also deportation. Some of these, no doubt, are best forgotten. But we might learn from them to go in for a little more variety than at present we seem capable of, and also to inquire whether a revival of the pillory and the stocks might not be a very useful thing."

Another suggestion of the Canon's is that "imprisonment should clearly be divided into different types, and the element of 'hard labour' (possibly in labour camps) introduced." His parting shot is "It is a pity that deportation is no longer possible."

Heaven save us from the graciousness of the Christians.

Day-to-day front

In Britain the Labour Party is in the doldrums. Defeated in 1951, their poll at bye-elections since has been down almost as much as that of the Tories. But let them take heart. Their colleagues abroad are marching triumphantly forward. The *Daily Herald* (7-1-53) reports a "victory for the Social Democrats" in Denmark, where they "have long fought to increase

women's rights." The particular field in which the victory was gained was that of succession to the throne—a new law allows women to succeed, whereas before they were barred. So the probability is that the King's daughter will succeed him instead of his brother.

Which will make a lot of difference to the Danish workers.

Lop for Parliament

As the big parties plan additions to the lists of promises they hold out to the public each election, they may be interested to hear about M. Ferdinand Lop, who has stood for nearly every election and bye-election held in France since the war. His programme is simple but all-embracing. He does not say how he is going to achieve his aims, but the aims themselves are clear:—

Greater prosperity for France.

Better homes and more pay for all French people.

Better working conditions for all French people.

Abolition of all taxes.

Extension of the Boulevard St. Michel to Deauville (much the same as extending Oxford St. to Bournemouth).

So the big British parties have by no means exhausted all the promises they could make to the electors.

Where to spend wintah

A valuable suggestion was recently made in the correspondence columns of the *Manchester Guardian*. In case our readers did not see it, we reprint it here:

"Dear Sir,—Why do not people think of going to India instead of South Africa for the winter? I went to South Africa and found the country hopelessly overcrowded; it was one long struggle to get accommodation, and one had to plan far ahead to be sure of getting any at all." (*Manchester Guardian*, 15-9-52.)

But in India, by contrast, there are "many magnificent hill stations" with "any amount of accommodation, servants, and hotel-keepers anxious to please." After all, "it is very important to cultivate good social relations with India, the country which holds the key to peace between East and West." After reading this eloquent appeal, the writer is ashamed to confess that he has selfishly stayed in England winter after winter, never thinking about the good he could do by going abroad and cultivating good social relations with the Indians. But he has decided to reform; he has made a good resolution to winter in India every year in future.

Provided he can get the writer of the letter to pay for him.

For richer, for poorer

The January sales are supposed to bring many bargains. Even in the fur coat business. The National Fur Company advertises one snip: a mink coat. The price before was rather steep—£2,500. But now it is a mere £1,250—as much as a £6-a-week worker gets in four years.

The newspapers tell us that there are no longer any rich—the tax-collector has reduced every one to a "dead level." So it must just be that some are poorer than others.

A.W.E.

SLINGS AND ARROWS

A new policy for Labour?

If the national press is to be believed, the Labour Party has been convulsed by its efforts to find a new policy both palatable to itself and acceptable by the voters. Agreement has not yet been reached and many and varied are the suggestions put forward. Morrison and Attlee, in their desire to capture the "respectable" vote, want to water down their policy, while the Bevanites want what they euphemistically call, "more Socialism." What they mean by this term can be seen if one reads the columns of the *Tribune*, which is usually full of bright ideas about how to capture the export markets or how to improve the efficiency of various industries. In a recent issue (9/1/53) Miss Jennie Lee contributes an idea which may be well worth considering by the leadership of her Party. We feel sure that there would be general agreement in the Party as well as acceptance by the electorate.

Occasionally the gaiety of nations is increased by suggestions which, although laughable, emanate from people who are too divorced from reality to realise their own absurdity. The theories that if Hitler had learned to play cricket there would not have been a second world war, or if the politicians could go on a shooting party (birds, not each other!) the present unrest would be settled, have already been mentioned in these columns. But Miss Lee, a miner's daughter, should know better.

Writing in her column "As I please," she mentions the chairman of a divisional Labour Party who refused to wear evening dress to a Mayoral function. Endorsing his actions she thinks that "M.P.s and local councillors should be rescued from this shabby business of keeping up with the Joneses." Not that she is against dressing up, perish the thought. On the contrary, "I am all for colour and pageantry. I believe in dressing up for ceremonial occasions."

All of us have heard the assurances of Labour leaders that due to their policies poverty and want have been abolished. Miss Lee evidently does not agree with this for she tells us in her concluding remarks, that "... it is time men's fashions were modified, and in the process the crass class distinction of the past would be left behind."

"Down with the white tie and tails" is the new slogan to be emblazoned on the banner of the Labour Party.

If this is what Bevanites produce we can only say with Lord Wellington who reviewing his troops on the eve of Waterloo, remarked, "I don't know what they'll do to the enemy, but by God, they frighten me!"

Cloud Kikuyu Land

Many an eyebrow has been raised, many a stiff upper-lip has been superciliously curled at the alleged practices of the Kikuyu tribe in Kenya. Journalists and politicians have publicly shuddered at the use of goat's blood in some of the Mau Mau initiation ceremonies, and have sworn to have no rest until these iniquitous deeds are wiped out. But it would be well

for these gentry to turn their attention to some practices back home which are just as redolent of witchcraft as those attributed to Mau Mau.

In fox hunting circles it is the practice for the huntsman who attends his first "meet" to be presented with the "brush" of the unfortunate fox, and to have his face smeared with its blood. This "rite," mark you, is not indulged in by "ignorant natives," or peasants, but by the cream of the "gentry," the county families, the landed aristocracy. No wonder Oscar Wilde described fox hunting as the "unspeakable in pursuit of the uneatable."

Writing in the *Evening Standard* (12/1/53), Bishop Cary a missionary in Kenya, says that the natives of the Kikuyu tribe have no words for love, gratitude, etc. He comments on their backwardness, and their alleged indolence, which he claims is the cause of their poverty. He views with horror the practices of Mau Mau and thinks they must be extirpated. But he says nothing about the use by the authorities of witch doctors who are at work absolving natives from their Mau Mau oaths. He has no word to say about the collective punishments that are inflicted for the crime of not giving information to the authorities. This man of God views with equanimity the herding of 12,000 natives into compounds, in the centre of which huge gallows are erected for the hanging of malcontents.

It may well be true that the Kikuyu have no word for love, gratitude, etc., but neither my Lord Bishop have they a word for "atom bomb" or "napalm bomb." These words have had to be taught them by the civilized whites!

It is easy to castigate the Kikuyu for laziness, and use that as an excuse for their poverty. But De Castro in his book "Geography of Hunger" tells a different story. "Wherever the Negro's contact with the European was prolonged," he writes (page 186) "one finds a notably deficient type of diet. In various parts of Africa... a children's disease is found... known as Kwashiorkor, or malignant malnutrition... In the opinion of Dr. H. C. Trawell, who studied the disease for twenty years in Uganda and Kenya, this last deficiency (protein) is the prime factor." He then proceeds to tell us that when the European settler offers the Negro a larger quantity of food in order to attract workers, he is not improving the diet but offering them more fuel to be returned in the form of productive work. The use of hunger to force natives away from their villages to work for the white boss is an old colonising trick. Dr. De Castro describes how in 1939, 3,000,000 natives of Kenya were restricted to reservations.

We would recommend the learned Bishop and those whom he supports by quoting holy writ, to refrain from their sweeping generalisations and to give the problem a little more thought. Who knows, but that they might then conclude that it is the desire for profit that is at the root of this unrest. They might even realise that there is a solution to the problem which would benefit not only "backward" Kikuyu, but also "advanced" Bishops; that of Socialism.

"Experience Essential"

Many workers, especially those in semi or highly skilled trades are always asked, when applying for a job, to give details of their experience and proficiency. If this is high an extra five shillings a week might be awarded him. If he has no experience he just does not get the job and becomes an unskilled labourer. This may appear to be good sense. It is no use giving a job of work to a man who knows nothing about it.

But "experience essential" is only applied to workers. Never does ignorance of a trade or business prevent a capitalist from becoming a director or chairman of enormous business concerns. In the *Evening Standard* (14/1/53) we are told that a Tory M.P. Mr. Rupert M. Speir, has been elected Chairman of Crossley Building Products. His qualifications? Apparently that he was legal adviser to a firm of Merchant Bankers.

Whenever a discontented worker points at the huge fees paid to directors, as an excuse to have his own

pay raised he is usually told that without the ability of the director he would have no pay whatever. Our hearts are made to bleed at the thought of the "tremendous responsibilities" of the men at the top who have to "run" the business.

It would be as well to bear in mind that a legal adviser is considered capable of "running" a building concern. It should also be remembered that this gentleman combines his new job of Master Builder, with a career as an M.P. and Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Civil Lord of the Admiralty. Truly an admirable Crichton. Nor is this an isolated example of the workings of Capitalism.

A glance through the Directory of Directors shows that there are many directors who hold as many as twenty or thirty directorships in businesses as diverse as printing and shipping, and in places as wide apart as Venezuela and Mesopotamia. "Experience not essential" is the qualification for a job in the Board room. Don't all rush! S.A.

THE ERRORS OF STALIN

"Economic Problems of Socialism in the U.S.S.R."

By J. STALIN (Foreign Languages Publishing House)

HAILED at the Communist Party Conference in Russia last October as "a work of genius," this pamphlet is an attempt to square the theories of Marxism with the practice of contemporary Russia. The major part consists of remarks by J. Stalin on economic questions connected with a discussion that took place in November 1951, and there are also replies to some of his comrades who put forward theories with which he disagreed. Limited space precludes us from dealing here with more than a few of the many points that are made in this pamphlet which, despite the rather wordy style of the author, really requires a pamphlet to give a full socialist answer.

Labour Power a Commodity

"Capitalist production is the highest form of commodity production. Commodity production leads to capitalism only if there is private ownership of the means of production, if labour power appears in the market as a commodity which can be bought by the capitalist and exploited in the process of production . . ."

On page 18 Russia is a society where "the means of production are no longer private but socialist property" and the system of wage labour has "long ceased to exist"—but on page 77 it is necessary "that real wages of workers and employees should be at least doubled." Since there is an obvious contradiction here, let us try to resolve it by examining the two qualifying conditions under which commodity production is admitted to lead to capitalism.

First, private ownership of the means of production means that some people are owners and some non-owners. Whether this ownership takes the form of individual shares or state bonds (as in nationalised industries and in Russia) does not affect the fact that

the means of production are class-owned, as distinct from being held in common. Second, can labour power be bought and exploited in the process of production in Russia?

Certainly it can. Where does the money come from needed to finance development schemes, armaments and other state expenditure if not from the surplus value produced by the workers? In Russia the workers may find it difficult (or even impossible) to name an individual who benefits from their labour—but so, for example, do Post Office workers in Britain. In both cases their labour power is a commodity, bought by others through the agency of the state, and paid for with wages which represent a fraction of the value produced.

To avoid reasoned discussion of the subject, Stalin attempts to disarm criticism by laughing it out of court. "Talk of labour power being a commodity, and of 'hiring' of workers sounds rather absurd now, under our system: as though the working class, which possesses means of production, hires itself and sells its labour power to itself."

What is absurd about this statement is the assumption that the working class possesses means of production. To talk of hiring workers is quite reasonable, provided you accept that labour power is bought, by the state, which allows access to what is produced to the privileged few and to the unprivileged many in similar proportions to those in other capitalist countries. The source of the absurdity is made even more obvious if we apply the statement to this country—"talk of hiring railway workers sounds rather absurd under nationalisation: as though the working class, which possesses means of production, hires itself." Of course the workers in Russia don't hire themselves—if they did

they would surely not need to be told to double the wages that they are supposed to pay themselves.

World Markets

In trying to prove that the means of production in Russia cannot be regarded as commodities, Stalin remarks "in the sphere of foreign trade, but only in this sphere, our means of production really are commodities, and really are sold (in the direct meaning of the term)." They are indirectly sold when allocated by the state to its enterprises. But the same remarks could apply to any state-owned industry in any country, and merely go to show how similar is the economy in Russia to that in the rest of the capitalist world.

The Disintegration of the Single World Market and the Deepening of the Crisis of World Capitalism is the heading of one section of the pamphlet. Russia, China, and the European People's Democracies "formed a united and powerful socialist camp confronting the camp of capitalism . . . so that now we have two parallel world markets." Soon these People's Democracies "will themselves feel the necessity of finding an outside market for their surplus products."

From the way in which this subject is dealt with, one might be led to imagine that the crisis of world capitalism is something from which the Russian camp stands apart. It is all very well for Stalin to talk of the inevitability of war between capitalist countries, but it cannot be denied that the "imperialism" that he so frequently attacks manifests itself as competition between rival producers for markets abroad. The entry of China and the other satellites into the arena can in no way be interpreted as a beneficial influence on world affairs—rather, it is an ominous indication that the struggle will be intensified and carried into new areas.

Relations of Production

Let us now examine one or two points contained in Stalin's replies to those he calls his erring comrades. It appears that Alexander Ilyich Notkin claimed that complete conformity of the relations of production with the character of the productive forces can be achieved only under Socialism and Communism. His critic is only interested in the present (which he calls Socialism). The productive forces, Stalin asserts, "undeniably move in advance of the relations of production even under Socialism. Only after a certain lapse of time do the relations of production change in line with the character of the productive forces." He refers to "backward, inert forces that do not realize the necessity for changing the relations of production," and it is reasonable to suppose that he includes among these the collective farms, who "will not recognize any other economic relation with the town except the commodity relation."

But these economic problems of the present Russian system have nothing whatever to do with the question that they appear to be debating. This was dealt with by Marx in a famous passage in the preface to "The Critique of Political Economy":—

"At a certain stage of their development the material forces of production in society come in conflict with the existing relations of production . . . From forms of development of the forces of production these relations turn into their fetters. Then begins an epoch of social revolution. With the change of the economic foundation

the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed."

Stalin would no doubt like to edit this to read "the superstructure is less rapidly transformed." Nevertheless, Marx's meaning is clear—the new social relations are in harmony with the new economic basis. The change from Capitalism to Socialism is the revolutionising of the productive relations, and talk of a certain lapse of time before they change in line with the productive forces is completely irrelevant.

Form and Essence

According to Stalin, economic development proceeds not by way of upheavals, but by gradual changes. Commodities, money and banks "lose their old functions and acquire new ones, preserve their old form, which is utilized by the socialist system." He solemnly writes of approaching the matter from the standpoint of Marxist analysis, and concludes "that it is chiefly the form, the outward appearance, of the old categories of capitalism that have remained in our country, but that their essence has radically changed."

Against this must be set the fact that nowhere in the works of Marx and Engels will you find reference to old and new functions of capitalist categories. They were concerned with delving below the outward appearance of things, not in order to show that form changes while essence remains the same, but to find the underlying principles that determine the nature of Capitalism. To claim that Socialism can utilize the form of capitalist institutions like money is just meaningless double-talk—unless "Socialism" is taken to mean "State Capitalism." Even then it still has to be shown how Communism (a system without commodities, money and banks) is helped along by the preservation of commodities, money and banks.

In the course of answering his comrade L. D. Yaroshenko, Stalin chides him for asserting "that there is no contradiction between the relations of production and the productive forces of society under Socialism." On the face of it, it is damaging to Stalin's "Marxist" theory to admit that there are such contradictions in Russia but, of course, he suitably qualifies his admission: "given a correct policy on the part of the directing bodies, these contradictions cannot grow into antagonisms." The directing bodies thus stand to be shot at when antagonisms arise (i.e., things go wrong), and when these bodies have been replaced by new ones the antagonisms presumably disappear, leaving just the old contradictions—quite a neat verbal solution of the economic problems in the U.S.S.R.

What Stalin calls the other errors of Comrade Yaroshenko consist largely of differences of opinion about adapting quotations of Marx and Engels, and one cannot help wishing that the latter were still alive to disprove that their ideas bore any resemblance to those that Stalin and Co. now put forward. As socialists, we can only hope that the publication of this pamphlet will lead Communist Party members and sympathisers (and others) to compare the theories of Stalin with those of Marx and Engels, and to discover which are calculated to promote the cause of Socialism and which to retard it.

S.R.P.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

FEBRUARY,



1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

LABOUR'S LOST ILLUSIONS

RIGHT from the formation of the Labour Party the S.P.G.B. opposed it, holding that its doctrine of changing class relationships through social reforms and its hope of abolishing war through international expressions of goodwill were founded in error about the nature of capitalism and socialism.

The S.P.G.B. still opposes the Labour Party for the same reasons but in the meantime the Labour Party has undergone a profound change, one that would have surprised and dismayed its pioneers. At its birth it had a genuine belief in its principles; now the fire and inspiration have died and what is left are the vote-catching manoeuvres of a caucus of disillusioned political managers, hardly distinguishable from those who control the Tory Party machine.

Two early themes of Labour Party propaganda were nationalisation and the search for peace. The words are still in use but the content has changed almost out of recognition. At first, as in Keir Hardie's "From Serfdom to Socialism," nationalisation was urged (mistakenly but with apparent sincerity), as a stepping stone to Socialism. Then came a later stage when nationalisation became an end in itself; and a third stage when "Public Boards" were discovered to be better than nationalisation.

Lastly came the discovery, openly voiced by Mr. Herbert Morrison and others during the recent Labour Government's six years of administering capitalism, that the Labour ideal is a so-called "mixed economy," a partnership between the Government and private capitalism.

Even this does not satisfy Mr. Morrison, for in a speech at Norwich, on January 5th, he rebuked those of his Party colleagues who are so "conservatively minded" as to be reluctant to adapt themselves to the "new" conditions.

"We have evolved a society which is certainly not a socialist society, but which is a changed and more socialistic society compared with that of fifty or even twenty years ago. In these circumstances our ideas, our

policies, our language—these things are bound to be somewhat different—require from us adaptability, and modifications are bound to occur as society evolves."

(*Manchester Guardian* 6 January, 1953)

The other inspiration of the early Labour Party was its reluctance to support war and armaments. At its annual conference in January, 1914, a few months before it was caught up in the war fever, it passed a resolution opposing increased armaments and conscription, endorsing the idea of international working class action against war, and seeking "to replace our present system of armed peace by an alliance between all the workers of the world for the purpose of lifting the burdens of poverty which press upon them today." (Report, Page 121).

Just a week before Mr. Morrison made his speech about adaptability the *Daily Herald*, mouthpiece of the T.U.C. and Labour Party, showed how well it had learned the lesson—and to what depths the once idealistic movement has fallen. This was in an editorial called "Partnership," published on 29 December, 1952.

It dealt with the latest version of the Labour Party's attitude to capitalism and dealt in a way with its ideas on peace and war. It should have earned top marks from Mr. Morrison. It began with "warm congratulations"; addressed to all who have had a hand in a recent outstanding technical achievement. And it ended, on the right Morrisonian note, with "all praise to the British industry for a fruitful partnership between public and private enterprise."

The reader will wonder what can have been the sweet (or bitter) fruit that lifted thus the heart of the *Herald* leader writer. What kind of product could it be that led the writer to say that "it is to such triumphs of skill and planning that Britain must look for victory in her battle for economic survival?"

It was "the new Scimitar jet bomber," described by an equally enthusiastic writer in the *Herald's* Conservative rival, the *Daily Express* (28 December) as able to fly "faster, further, higher than any other bomber," with "ten times the power of last war's best."

The only discernible difference of approach between the Labour *Herald* and the Conservative *Express* is that the former sees in it a justification for the new Labour Party ideal of "large grants from the Ministry of Supply" which enabled the private firm to get ahead of American rivals.

Workers who still believe that the Labour Party is not like other parties of capitalism should ponder these things and draw the obvious conclusion.

THE OLD, OLD STORY

The general increase in our activity and the rise in prices compels us to again ask for donations to funds.

The membership have agreed by a large majority to increase their weekly subscription from 3d. to 6d. While this will be an important contribution to our funds, we must point out that this increase will not be sufficient to cover the many items of expenditure we have to meet during the next few months.

If you wish to see our work carried on and extended, send what you can manage to E. Lake, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

ABOUT BOOKS

UNFORTUNATELY, or maybe, fortunately, we are not on the lists that book publishers use for sending out free copies for review. Being members of the working class we are unable to acquire all the books that are published, and very few books when they are first published. Further, being members of the working class, we have limited time for reading. Invariably we wait until we learn something about a book before we give it a scanning and refer to it in these columns. That means that some books are in their second or third, or even later, editions before we get round to them.

Such a book is "Cry, the Beloved Country," by Alan Paton published by Jonathan Cape at 10s. 6d. This book was first published in 1948 but the recent film of the story has drawn a lot of attention to it.

It is a story of what may be termed the industrial revolution of South Africa. It deals with the final destruction of tribal life among the African negroes and the drawing away of the younger men and women from the rural areas to the industrial centres where they become wage workers. It emphasises the difficulties that these people experience in adapting themselves to the conditions of a rapidly expanding capitalism and the crimes that follow from their abject poverty.

The story centres mainly in Johannesburg where theft, prostitution, drunkenness, rape, robbery with violence and murder are rife. The author tells us in his introductory note that his story is a compound of truth and fiction. He says that his account of the boycott of the buses, the erection of Shanty Town, the finding of gold at Odendaalsrust and the strike of the miners is such a fiction-truth compound; that in some respects it is not true, but "considered as a social record it is the plain and simple truth."

The whole theme is worthy of a better approach. The events narrated are viewed through the eyes of a religious humanitarian and the story is plastered with religious quotes and sentiments. There are passages that reveal a clear understanding of the process that is taking place in South Africa, but the idea that permeates the book is that the solution to the negro workers' problems is to be found in a kinder, more Christian and humanitarian approach, especially on the part of the white population. This is overdone and spoils the reading. This is a book worth reading if it should come your way, but it is not worth going out of your way to read it.

Another book first published in 1948 is "Men, Machines and History" by S. Lilley and published by the Cobbett Press, 10s. 6d. This is volume seven of a series entitled "Past and Present" which is being published under the guidance of an impressive editorial board of professors. We learn that it was the publisher's original intention to complete the series with about forty books but they seem to have petered out after number eight. The eight books of this series that we have read are good. "Men, Machines and History" is exceedingly good.

Fundamental to an understanding of the socialist case is the knowledge that it is the continuous improvement in the tools that man uses that is fundamentally responsible for the changes in the structure of the

society of which he is a member. Human society has travelled a long way since the days of the flint sickle and stone hammer—to the days of jet-propelled transport, radar and the release of atomic energy. At certain points in that journey we can observe how a particular discovery or a group of inventions have had an outstanding effect upon the prevailing method of production. We can, for instance, see how the invention of gunpowder hastened the end of the rule of the feudal baron protected by his armour and his castellated walls. We can see how the discovery of steam power released a flood of subsidiary inventions and gave impetus to the industrial revolution in this country, and the social changes that followed it.

Those are the glaring examples. This book, "Men, Machines and History," takes us from the time of Palaeolithic man with his primitive tools of stone, bone and ivory through the 7,000 and more years to the end of the last war and the release of atomic energy. It refers to many hundreds of inventions between those times and gives us a little of the mechanics, a little of the technology and a little of the social effects surrounding many of them.

The author says that he has made his references to social conditions very brief because other books in the series will provide the social background at greater length. All the same, his references are extremely pertinent.

He tells us of the discovery of copper and the inventions that followed from it and how, by 3000 B.C. it had produced a decisive change in the social structure.

"The simple communities of more or less equal farmers had been replaced by states in which the vast majority of the inhabitants lived at subsistence level, often as slaves or serfs, while all the surplus product of their labours was used to provide a luxurious existence for a small class of kings, nobles and priests, as well as supporting the civil services and armies which formed the mechanism for extracting from the masses the products of their work. Class-divisions had become the basis of social structure." (Page 11.)

Mr. Lilley then goes on to tell us that a given social structure, having been thrown up by a level of technical development, can then become a retarding influence on further technical advance. He instances the great slave empires that arose in Greece and Rome following the division of society into classes. The stagnation of technique that prevailed at that time was not due to lack of problems to be solved but to the make-up of society into, broadly speaking, two classes: the down-trodden peasants, slaves and serfs who did all the productive work and received only the bare necessities of life in return, and the small ruling class of priests, nobles and kings who did no productive work but lived in privilege and luxury on the fruit of the work of others.

The working class had knowledge and experience of the tools and techniques that were then in existence. They could quite simply have invented improvements, except that they had no incentive to invent since any increase in production would be taken away from them to add to the wealth of their masters. Further, as they worked to the utmost, they had no leisure time to devote to invention.

The ruling class, on the other hand, had no contact with the process of production, was ignorant of the technical deficiencies and had no practical knowledge and experience to effect improvements.

Yet, in this period of stagnation progress did not altogether cease; we learn of the invention of the spoked wheel, improvements in military equipment and the diffusion of the use of bronze over large parts of Europe.

So we can proceed through the middle ages, the industrial revolution and two world wars marvelling at the ingenuity of man. The book is splendidly and copiously illustrated and carries graphs and charts showing relative invention rates and other interesting data. Right at the end of his book the author betrays a sneaking regard for Soviet Russia and boosts the rate

of progress in that country. We can overlook that against the excellence of his work.

In "Retrospect and Summary" at the end of the book the author arrives at two complementary conclusions:

"... the form of society has a very great effect on the rate of inventions... a form of society which in its young days encourages technical progress can, as a result of the very inventions it engenders, eventually come to retard further progress until a new social structure replaces it."

"... technical progress—invention and the spread of the use of invention—is a fundamental factor in determining social structure and in bringing about the necessity for a change from one social structure to another."

We could not agree more. Hasten the day when the capitalist social structure gives way to the socialist one.

W. WATERS.

THE MARRIAGE INSTITUTION

A GREAT deal has been written and spoken in recent months on the general subject of marriage and matters connected with it. The Royal Commission on Marriage and Divorce has since October, 1951, been collecting evidence, comments and recommendations from all manner of interested parties, from lawyers to school-teachers. Wives have been pitied for being kept short of money and censured for salting too much away; husbands have similarly been unable to do the right thing; and cases have been made out for both raising and lowering the present marriage age.

There is no doubt that a great deal of hardship and misery is caused by the failure of an increasing number of people to order their lives and to conduct their personal relationships in a satisfactory and harmonious way. As socialists we are concerned about this social problem from the point of view of understanding its underlying causes. To do so we must have some knowledge of the history and evolution of marriage, and of how it affects and is affected by other aspects of society.

History of Marriage

Lewis H. Morgan, whose researches in this field have been widely recognised as authoritative, distinguished five forms of marriage corresponding to different stages in social development. In primeval times general promiscuity at first dominated. Following this appeared families related by blood which were founded on group-marriages of own brothers and sisters, and Punalua or group-marriage between collateral brothers and sisters. Then came pair marriage, including polygamous marriage (a privilege of wealth). Only with civilisation did permanent monogamy enter, founded on marriage between one man and one woman under the assumption of complete life-long fidelity.

The institution of marriage is thus very far from being the "natural" state of affairs that many imagine it to be—indeed, taking a historical view it may be considered as biologically unnatural. Robert Briffault, in his book "Sin and Sex," points out the curiously superstitious and ritual nature of the marriage institution:

"The languages of Western culture preserve in a fossilized form the archaeological survival of social conditions in which marriage had no reference whatever to love, and the freedom of choice of the parties had nothing to do with it, but the institution was an economic arrangement contracted by the tribe, the clans concerned, and not by the man and woman con-

cerned. The curious savage notion which is embodied in fossil form in our languages still survives in Timbuctoo and among the wilder tribes of Australian savages. We accordingly speak of "getting married" as a passive verbal expression of which the active subject is not the man or the woman, but the clerk, priest or other person who "marries" them. People do not marry one another, but require some third person to 'marry' them."

Economic Considerations

Whatever may be said to be the essential ingredients of successful marriage, the institution is still an economic one, concerned with property relationships, even for members of the working class who are virtually propertyless. It is not enforced as a reasonable and desirable arrangement, but because it is necessary to keep the fabric of present society intact. Any doubts about this would be dispelled by a glance at the aspects that the Royal Commission has had to deal with—joint property, disclosure of liabilities and assets, secret bank accounts, income tax returns, salaries for services, and so on.

Under a system based on ownership of means of wealth production by a minority it is inevitable that a high value should be set on "security"—of tenure of a job for a worker and of capital for a capitalist. In a similar way, marriage offers a degree of security to those who enter into it. This applies particularly to women, though there are factors that also make it socially desirable for men, who are often thought to acquire a responsible attitude to their jobs in addition to their other responsibilities. It is significant that the economic barriers to marriage have been the subject of reforms, to ensure that the disparity between the single and married worker's standard of living is as small as possible.

It is essential to the preservation of any social institution that it should command respect. Just as the worker "respects" the capitalist's right to appropriate surplus value, so the couple who agree to make common cause together wish to be "respectable" in the eyes of other people. Consequently there comes to be a separation between the actual relations of men and women and the pattern that the institution sets up as the ideal. This gulf between the actual and the artificial comes out in many ways, such as in the

atmosphere of make-believe and false impression that surrounds so many present-day courtships. Rather than admit his subservient position as a humble wage-slave, the gallant suitor often pretends to be better off than he really is, with disastrous consequences when the truth is revealed.

All these things—insecurity, respectability, showing the hostile world a false face—are bound up with the fragmented nature of present society. The human family is split up into countless individual families, whose members are obliged to treat, and be treated by the others as strangers. The community of interests that prevails (in theory, at any rate) in the family unit is contrasted by the clash of interests in the jungle-world outside it.

Future Prospects

Marriage and the family take their form from the way in which people get their living. What, then, can we say about their form under Socialism? Engels, in "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State," had this to say:—

"With the transformation of the means of production into social property there will disappear also wage labour, the proletariat, and therefore the necessity for

a certain—statistically calculable—number of women to surrender themselves for money. Prostitution disappears; monogamy instead of collapsing, at last becomes a reality—also for men... the single family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private housekeeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of the children becomes a public affair."

Only with the removal of economic considerations influencing the choice of a partner will marriage become the free expression of mutual inclination. The disappearance of property relationships will mean the disappearance of the supremacy of the male as the "breadwinner." That marriage will no longer be regarded as indissoluble will follow from the recognition that it is only in the interests of humanity when it is based on love.

Perhaps the greatest change will be the widening of the affections of people. The disappearance of what Engels called the cellular form of society will mean that they will not be starved of love, as so many are today. Marriage will not be a defence against unhappiness, a retreat from a world of strangers, but an association that supplements a wider love for humanity.

S.R.P.

A CHINESE BIRTHDAY

THE third anniversary of the People's Republic of China was celebrated in London on 1st October by a play called "Speak Bitterness," performed at the St. Pancras Town Hall. A Communist-inspired organisation called the "British-China Friendship Association" organised the affair and sold tickets for the seats, of which about one half were unoccupied. The proceedings opened with speechmaking from behind a table on the platform decorated with the Union Jack and the national flag of China. Mr. Stephen Swingle, a Labour M.P., said that his contribution should be regarded as a preface to the play. He pleaded that China should be given a seat on U.N.O. and also for friendly trading relations between the two countries which, he claimed, would certainly result in orders for Britain. Dr. H. Joules, a public figure in the British medical world, who had just returned from a visit to China, also spoke, and outlined various achievements which he claimed for the Chinese Government. He also said that the British Government should withdraw from the war in Korea.

The play which then followed was performed in semi-darkness. Lantern slides of scenes from China were projected on a screen in the background. This unorthodox method of production certainly has much to recommend it from the producer's point of view, saving the cost of stage scenery and scene shifting. Moreover, the illustrations on the screen helped the propaganda content of the play. It was particularly useful on this occasion, as it helped to cover some of the shortcomings of the performance.

The story, which was told by Unity Players, glorified the Chinese Red Army and illustrated the Land Reform and the emancipation of women. The production was advertised as being with Chinese music and costumes but in actuality fell short of these promises.

The music was over almost as soon as it started, and, apart from the heroine's, the few Chinese costumes seen on the stage were of the English fancy-dress ball variety. The rest of the cast wore ordinary open-necked sports shirts. Even the latter garments were not worn over the trousers, as is the case with the Chinese in their native land, but were tucked in according to the fashion in England.

The play concluded with the spectacle of the cast proceeding to the footlights of the stage and pleading with the audience, in the name of 500 million potential Chinese customers, for "your" motor trucks and machinery in exchange for "our" tungsten and molybdenum.

Since it is generally recognised that business is all in the hands of the capitalist class, the constant reiteration of the benefits of trade between the two countries could only have meaning for them. Our rulers are, no doubt, fully aware of the profits that could be made out of trade with China, having been engaged in this very trade for over a century. Moreover, it was the British Government which tried for friendly trade relations by granting diplomatic recognition to the Chinese Republic in 1950, and, incidentally, in so doing, breaking the agreement with their U.S.A. allies who have consistently supported both financially and militarily the now ousted Chiang Kai Shek clique. The Americans thwarted this particular piece of duplicity and brought their British rivals into line, by placing an embargo on the export of cotton to the British colony of Hongkong while keeping up shipments to Japan. This enabled the Japanese to successfully compete in manufactured cotton goods at the expense of their British competitors in Hongkong. The Americans apparently considered this display of the iron fist useful in keeping the British to their agreement with the U.S.A. regarding the embargo

of goods to China. Despite their outward show of patriotism by the British ruling class and the fact that their workers are fighting in Korea, when there is a profit to be made in selling goods to the enemy, our "betters" seem quite unable to resist the opportunity.

If the members of the British capitalist class

interested in trade with China had been present at this affair, they would certainly have had a few heartaches. The burthen of the propaganda put out, by reminding them they were no longer prospering from the Chinese trade as of yore, would have acted like salt rubbed into wounds. Speak Bitterness indeed!

F. OFFORD.

RATIONAL THINKING

IN the previous article "Custom and Power" we outlined the parts that custom- and power-thinking have played in obstructing man's understanding of the phenomena of the objective world. Such an outline was necessary in order to appreciate the methods used to overcome these obstacles, the changes that result and, in particular, the function of rational thinking as a tool in the hand of the socialist.

Man belongs to nature—he is part of it—and his productive mastery over it consists in the fact that he has the advantage over all other animals of being able to know and correctly apply its laws. His evolution has consisted in increasing his power to deal with the material environment. As Marx put it, knowledge is power—it is sought not merely to interpret the world but to change it. All social life is essentially practical, and all changing of circumstances by human activity can only be understood as revolutionising practice.

Rational thinking is the process of acquiring efficiency in dealing with the environment. It is important to appreciate that it is a process, and not a special faculty or organ. Rationality is a quality of thought; it is always present to a greater or lesser degree. A man does not, strictly speaking, use his reason—he uses his brain more or less reasonably, or rationally in the circumstances which confront him. It is therefore erroneous to speak of the innate irrationality of primitive man, or the innate rationality of civilised man. The degree of rationality is largely determined by the culture pattern of the particular society in which it functions.

Order in Nature

The process of thinking requires adequate, correct and consistent experience in order to function efficiently. It must always conform to facts, and never contradict itself in drawing inferences from them. We are able to reason from the past and present to the future, and take action in line with such reasoning, only because there is an underlying order in nature. A certain set of circumstances is always followed by a corresponding result, and there is always a constant relation between any one aspect of reality and all others. If the world were other than a unity, if its parts could act haphazardly without affecting others, then no scientific thinking would be possible.

Man is the only animal capable of making his own conditions of existence. The world as we know it—an artificial world—has been made by the application of his ideas to it. The extent to which he controls it depends upon his conforming to existing facts, hence it depends upon his accuracy in perceiving them. He fails to achieve his object when that perception is false,

and succeeds when it is true. Rational thinking simply means the conformity of human ideas to the actual relation of man to his environment. It begins with the method of trial and error which, in tackling a problem, eventually arrives at a solution which "works," that is, fits in with the facts; it is a labour-saving development of this method.

Trial and error is a perfectly valid method, but it is a limited and wasteful one. Rational thinking is the essentially human improvement on this method, which is also used by animals other than man. If one course of action proves successful and another fails there is a reason for it. If sufficient knowledge had been available and applied, it would have been possible to have predicted the rational, i.e., successful course of action. As knowledge and the scientific method of thinking grow, so the use of trial and error is superseded—the more efficient method tends to prevail.

Knows No Compromise

Every idea and procedure arises, gains influence, and is adopted because it is more rational, more in harmony with facts and experience, than its predecessor. A truth may be distorted or suppressed, but it comes forward again and again until it is ultimately accepted. It does this because the ordered process of rational thinking enables the same point to be reached afresh, even though it was earlier abandoned. This process is invariably resisted, and its development retarded, because it is always opposed to the established views and apparent interests of the majority. But its ultimate triumph is assured, even though this may take centuries.

Every rational process of thought is progressive, because it can never stop short of its ultimate logical consequences. A new idea never proceeds at once to its ultimate conclusion; it is always only partly rational—more so than its predecessors, but still influenced by the traditional errors which it opposes. Yet once it has arisen it cannot stop halfway. Its full development may be wholly unpredicted at the outset. Its immediate consequences may even be repulsive to those who advance it, since they often adopt the same attitude to the next step as their opponents do to the new principle itself.

The notions of compromise, moderation, and the avoidance of extremes are entirely irrelevant and meaningless in the rational process, which only suffers from defect and never from over-application. Those who at first bitterly oppose a rational principle and later accept it often turn their opposition to its immediate consequences. They seek to establish a comfortable and permanent resting-place in the midst of the advancing tide. While taking credit for their enlighten-

ment in accepting what can no longer be disputed or opposed, their attitude to the next step is just the same as that which they adopted to the original one. Yet despite this pull of tradition, the course of rational thinking is only temporarily arrested, and eventually proceeds to exhaust all the possibilities that it contains.

Significance for Socialists

This brings us to consideration of the part that rational thinking plays in the growth of socialist ideas. One of its most obvious applications is to the question of reform versus revolution. If rationality knows no compromise then those who advocate reforms must show that the problems they seek to solve are, in fact, not ultimately caused by the system that they continue to support. Assuming that they, like us, start with wanting to solve such problems as poverty and war, they must show that these are capable of being solved by the immediate measures they propose. That they do not do so, that they have to seek excuses for the failure of their policies, is proof that they are not acting in accordance with the facts of the society in which they live.

If their argument is that it is not possible to jump straight from the present to the solution of these problems, then we are entitled to know what the intermediate steps are. Of course, they might find some justification for their advocacy of reforms in the statement that "a new idea never proceeds at once to its logical conclusion." But the reason for the delay in this case is precisely the existence of reformist ideas that offer a spurious short cut to the ultimate goal.

Once the idea of Socialism has arisen in men's minds, and given that this idea is in correspondence with the facts of the world in which it is to apply, then its ultimate triumph is assured. It is not inevitable in the sense of being predestined or mechanical. It is inevitable because it is in line with men's needs in society. The substitution of a Labour for a Tory Government, for example, is a course of action (trial and error) that does not "work" as far as the majority of the electorate is concerned. There is no question of the immediate establishment of Socialism being too "extreme"—if it is the solution, then delaying it will not make it less extreme. Once the principle of Socialism is conceded to be correct then there can be

no reason for consenting to the perpetuation of Capitalism.

Another important application of rational thinking is the concept of unity or oneness of the world. A particular idea cannot be valid in one country and invalid in another. If the doctrines of racism are shown to be inconsistent with the facts in Britain, then it is only a matter of time before such inconsistency will also be shown up in S. Africa. Also, the same set of circumstances cannot be held to be qualitatively different according to the time and place of their occurrence. The Communist Party dialectician may argue that wages in Russia are socialist wages, but if they perform the same function as they do in America or Britain then their essential similarity will sooner or later be perceived. The arguments based on this false distinction will consequently be rendered invalid, so making it easier for socialist ideas to be accepted.

One factor that contributes greatly to the development of rational thinking is the extension of modern methods of production throughout the world. A machine is no respecter of persons or opinions—the only thing it demands of the user is knowledge. When the socialist says that all men are capable of understanding, he is met with the objection that some are "inferior" and will never understand. But the objector finds this point of view increasingly difficult to uphold in face of the facts of "backward" Koreans using weapons just as efficiently as Americans, and of "working class" politicians controlling just as successfully the machinery of government as the hereditary rulers. Prejudice is thus broken down, and the myths of human inequalities exploded.

Finally, we are brought to question the very basis of the present system of society. Ownership by a privileged class of the means of production, and the resulting conflict of classes, contradict the tendency towards universality in the world. So long as the interests of one section of the community are opposed to those of another, the whole social organism is unhealthy. The demand of the socialist—a demand that knows no compromise—is for a rational world. Once equipped with the knowledge of how this can be brought about, there is nothing that can effectively prevent him communicating that knowledge to others.

S.R.P.

FROM POLLITT TO STALIN

A man from Mars, having recently landed on our globe and having read the eulogies of Stalin from various Communist sources, noticed that one from Pollitt in the same terms did not seem to have appeared. He therefore suggested that the following might fill this gap.

"Hail Stalin.

Salutation from Harry Pollitt, I address you on behalf of the working class of Great Britain, as the teacher, guide and friend of the whole world, leader, teacher and friend of the working class of all countries in the world, the great architect of socialism and leader of mankind. Oh Stalin in my little island away yonder my name is as big as yours, only I wander off the party line sometimes, but you Oh Great One, put me right. I work and wonder, while you watch and wait, I often blunder, while you work wonders. When I look at you

I get dizzy, and when I look at your new policy I get dizzier, and when I look down I get puzzled, and when I look up I get dazzled, and when I look back and see where all the party comrades have landed who have wandered off your line, I know and feel how right you are Oh Mighty One. Oh Stalin, Stalin I have endured nerve racking pains, day after day, night after night, year after year, trying to keep up with your change of policies, from Popular Fronts, to Unpopular Fronts, from Imperialist Wars to Workers Wars, and now as a defender of the British Empire against the Yankee Billionaires. Oh Mighty Stalin leader and saviour of mankind, my way hither was the way of destiny, I remain your obedient stooge, part Capitalist, part Socialist, and part Communist, nothing of a man in me at all."

R. SMITH.

IS THERE A CLASS WAR?

MANY Labour Party leaders and Tory counterparts would agree with "The Economist" that, "today, the class war description of trade union activity is out of date; its spirit is kept alive by the Communists because it is part of the Soviet war on social democracy, by others only because their thought ossified years ago." (September 6th, 1952.)

"The Economist" could mean that society itself had changed and the class war description no longer applied or else it could mean that the analysis of capitalism as a society based on class conflict had been proved wrong; that today, the working class, through their trade unions, must work hand in hand with their employers to increase production if they want to further their interests.

Whichever meaning is taken the result remains the same. Either view will find many adherents among the apologists for the present system in the avowedly capitalist and allegedly labour parties.

Class war is usually associated with the name of Karl Marx, and the Communist parties pay lip-service to some of his theories; it is true that they preach class war, at times, but they also preach class collaboration, whichever suits the needs of Soviet policy.

Long before Marx, historians and economists recognised the existence of classes and the conflict between them. These facts proved useful in the struggles of the rising capitalist class against the relics of the feudal aristocracy. But in the Munzer uprising in Germany, the Levellers in the English Revolution and Babeuf in the French Revolution, Marx saw the beginnings of class struggle between the working class and capitalist class and put forward the view that the outcome of this conflict would be the establishment of a classless society. To the classical economists the struggle between the working class and the capitalist class was an obstacle to the development of capitalist production and they claimed that a harmonious relationship between capital and labour would develop the productive forces and provide plenty for all. But the wishful thinking of the economists couldn't alter the facts. As Frederick Engels, Marx's friend and collaborator, pointed out, the struggles of the working class movement in England and France in the early 19th century showed that harmony between the two classes was impossible.

Marx completed the analysis of capitalist society started by earlier economists. He showed that the tendency of capitalist development was for the means and instruments of production to become concentrated in the hands of a smaller and smaller section of society and that the bulk of the population having no other access to the means of living must sell their ability to work to this small group in order to live. They received in the form of wages barely sufficient to keep them and what they produced more than this was pocketed by the capitalist class; this surplus being the purpose behind the productive process. Goods were not produced because people needed them, but because they could be sold at a profit. If the workers demanded higher wages it meant less profits for the capitalist class,

if the capitalist class reaped bigger profits it meant greater exploitation of the working class. This gave rise to an antagonism of interest between the capitalist class and working class that would remain as long as capitalism lasts.

Today, the vast majority of the people still have to sell their labour power for a wage often hardly enough to live on. The small section of society, the capitalist class, still own the means and instruments of production—nationalisation doesn't alter the capitalist class ownership, it only changes the name above the door. At present there is a general demand for wage increases, by the working class through their trade unions; institutions which have arisen for the sole purpose of fighting to improve wages and conditions and are the only means whereby the workers can express their demands. There is also the demand for greater production and wage restraint made by press and parliament, and all the other powerful means of expression at the disposal of the capitalist class.

Yet many claim that there is no fundamental class conflict in society. They are like the ostrich which buries its head in the ground. When the one party is pushing through measures the opposition party criticizes it for carrying on class-warfare and yet they maintain a class war doesn't exist. Why then the resistance? It takes at least two forces to give rise to a conflict. And incidentally, most of these measures have nothing whatever to do with the clash of interest between the capitalist class and the working class but where is their logic? They would say that opposition was imbued with the idea of the class struggle. Are the engineering and shipbuilding unions along with the many others demanding higher wages because they are imbued with the theory of class struggle? It is obvious that they are struggling to maintain their standard of living in the face of rising prices.

The more capitalism has changed the more it remains the same; the existence of classes and the conflict between them are essential to it.

There was some justification for the classical economists holding the view that if only capital and labour worked in harmony plenty could be produced for everyone. Capitalism was in the early stages of development; the class ownership of the means and instruments of production hadn't really shown itself to be a fetter on the further development of the productive forces.

But today, Capitalism has forged those gigantic productive forces which if the working class willed it, could lay the foundation for a society that would provide plenty for all.

The experience of the working class movement throughout the world since Engels' day has endorsed his argument that any concord between capital and labour is impossible. The scientific analysis of capitalist society has proved that no agreement can be possible. The highest expression of this working class experience is the struggle for the abolition of Capitalism and the establishment of Socialism—a classless society.

J.T.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Our Annual Conference will be held as usual at Easter on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 3rd, 4th and 5th, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square.

Further particulars will be published in the March Socialist Standard.

A PUBLIC MEETING

at the Islington Central Library,
Holloway Road (2 minutes Highbury Tube Station).
"Socialist Millionaires"
Friday, 20th February, 8 p.m.
Questions and Discussion.

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETINGS

at the Co-op. Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road
(3 minutes from Finsbury Park Tube Station).
Thursday, 12th February, 8 p.m.,
"The Revolution in China"—F. Offord.
Thursday, 26th February, 8 p.m.,
"The Geography of Hunger"—J. D'Arcy.

DEBATE

at Hammersmith Town Hall
(Small Hall),
on Monday, 9th February, at 7.30 p.m.
Subject:—"Liberalism or Socialism."
For the S.P.G.B.:—J. Darcy.
For the Liberal Party:—Roy Douglas.

LEWISHAM BRANCH MEETINGS

Mondays at 8 p.m.
February 23rd, "Capitalist Crises," E. Hardy.
Room 1, Co-op. Hall,
Davenport Road,
Rushey Green,
Catford, S.E.6.

HACKNEY LECTURES

at Bethnal Green Library, Cambridge Heath Road,
(Facing Tube Station)
Fridays at 8 p.m.
Feb. 6th "Production and Overproduction"—E. Hardy.
" 13th "The Bourgeois Revolution in Spain"—K. Smith.
" 20th "Significance of the U.S.A. Election"—E. Willmott.
" 27th "Socialism and W. Morris"—E. Kersley.
Mar. 6th "The Life and Work of Karl Marx"—H. Waite.

PUBLIC MEETING

at

CONWAY HALL,
RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1

Thursday, 19th February at 7.30 p.m.

"CAPITALISM AND MONOPOLIES"

Speaker - E. Hardy

All Welcome

Questions and Discussion

HEAD OFFICE SUNDAY MEETINGS
at 7.30 p.m.

Sunday, 8th February,
(Title to be announced)
Speaker: R. Coster.
Sunday, 22nd February,
(Title to be announced)
Speaker: R. Ambridge.

HEAD OFFICE FORUM

Saturdays, 14th and 21st February, at 7 p.m.
"The Nature of the Socialist Revolution"
Evans, Gilmac, Waite and Parker.

MEETINGS AT DENNISON HOUSE

Vauxhall Bridge Road (near Victoria Station),
on Sundays at 7 p.m.
Sunday, February 1st,
"Conflict in Kenya"
Speaker: C. May.
Sunday, February 15th,
"Challenge of the East"
Speaker: J. McGregor.

Sunday, March 1st,
"Debate with the Anarchists."
Meetings Commence at 7 p.m.

WEST HAM BRANCH LECTURES

at Salisbury Road School, Manor Park Broadway, E.12
(Near "Earl of Essex").
Thursdays at 8 p.m.

February 12th,
"The History of the Working Class Movement"
G. Kerr.
February 25th,
Title to be announced.

GLASGOW CITY AND KELVINGROVE
MEETING

at Central Halls (Room 7),
50, Bath Street, Glasgow.
Sunday, February 15th, at 7.30 p.m.
"Socialism versus the Labour Party,"
Speaker: R. Reid.
Admission Free. Questions.

TO ALL PARTY MEMBERS

"SOCIALISM AND BACKWARD COUNTRIES"
A meeting of Party members will be held to discuss
this subject at Head Office on Sunday, 22nd February,
1953, at 3 p.m.

PAMPHLETS

"The Socialist Party and War"	1/-	(Post free 1/2)
"Russia Since 1917"	1/-	" 1/2
"The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years"	1/-	" 1/2
"The Racial Problem— A Socialist Analysis"	1/-	" 1/2
"Socialism"	4d.	" 6d.
"Socialism or Federal Union?"	4d.	" 6d.
"The Socialist Party: Its Principles and Policy"	4d.	" 6d.
"Is Labour Government the Way to Socialism?"	4d.	" 6d.
"Nationalisation or Socialism?"	6d.	" 8d.

All obtainable from the Literature Committee,
52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month at 7.15 p.m., at Kingsley Hall, Old Market Street, Bristol. Secretary: J. Flowers, 8, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 11th and 25th Feb., 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 85, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in each month at Co-op Club, "Oakfield", Bilton Road., at 7.30 p.m. Correspondence to C. Walsh, 76 Railway Terrace, Rugby.

SWANSEA.—D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES.

Socialist Party of Australia, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

Socialist Party of Canada, P.O. Box 751, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Socialist Party of Ireland, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire. Sec. c/o. 29 Lincoln Ave., Belfast, N. Ireland.

Socialist Party of New Zealand, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

World Socialist Party of the United States, Room 807, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The **SOCIALIST STANDARD**, **WESTERN SOCIALIST** and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

Branch Meetings—continued

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Tottenham meets 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road School, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hallard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.13.

Wickford meets Thursdays at 7.30 p.m. at St. Peter's, London Road, Wickford Secretary J. R. Skiliter, St. Edmunds', Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at Digbeth Institute. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. First and third Thursdays in Feb. (5th and 19th), Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. C. Phillips, 4 Lowell House, Sultan Terrace, S.E.3.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 55, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Ealing meets every Friday at 8 a.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea.

Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Aikenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, Feb. 9th and 23rd at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to M. Temple, 74 Gore Rd., Hackney, E.9.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m., at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 155, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to Secretary, at above address.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Ilkington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. D. Courtney, 53 Canonbury Park South, N.1.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec., 446, Staines Road, Twickenham. Branch meets Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at the above address. Tel. Feltham 4006.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets Tuesdays, 10th and 24th February, at 7.45 p.m., Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate. Sec. J. M. Breakley, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (nr. "Met" Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180 Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmer's Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 583 Vol. 49 March, 1953

HOPE FOR THE SOCIALIST
FUTURE

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

A SYMPATHETIC OPPONENT
OF SOCIALISM

TWO SHOCKING BOOKS

GERMANY CALLING

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF
NEW ZEALAND

SLINGS AND ARROWS

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

Eisenhower Speaks—

Business as Usual

THE AMERICAN CAPITALIST CLASS is now indisputably the strongest in the world, and within the Western bloc its will is largely, and inevitably, taken for law. This gives great importance to the first State of the Union message sent by President Eisenhower to Congress, since in it we should be able to see exactly what the working class of the Western world is to be called upon to endure in the next four years. As a Socialist one would expect to find only changes in detail; and an examination of the message reveals few even of these.

For example, Eisenhower said that "the Administration is giving immediate increased attention to the development of additional Republic of Korea forces." This follows on recent statements by prominent Republicans

KENSINGTON TOWN HALL

(opp. Kensington High St. Und. Station).

DEBATE

WHICH WAY TO WORLD PEACE?

Chairman: C. MAY

Mr. GORDON EVANS, United Nations Association
A. TURNER, Socialist Party of Great Britain

7.30 p.m. MONDAY, MARCH 16th.

Admission Free.

that, if war breaks out in Europe, the Europeans should provide the soldiers and America the arms, and that in Asia the American leaders should "use Asiatics to fight Asiatics." It is bad for the Government if too many American workers are killed off fighting for the American capitalists in Korea; therefore, let the Korean workers do it. But this idea is not new. Besides the contingents from many states already fighting in Korea, on January 8th new detachments arrived from the Netherlands, Greece, Siam, and Belgium. And in the older Empires, this practice is taken for granted. When some of the member-states of the United Nations raised the question of France's treatment of her North African colonies, President Auriol boasted that France had been a pioneer in the equal treatment and association of races. If this means anything, it seems to refer to the fact that the French ruling class does not insist on French workers exclusively doing the fighting

which is necessary to preserve the Empire intact; Negro troops are drafted to Morocco to suppress the Moroccans, and Moroccan soldiers are sent to Indo-China to fight the Viet-Minh rebels. In Malaya, the British ruling class uses a large variety of troops. General Sir Gerald Templer, the High Commissioner there, seems to think it a matter for self-congratulation that he has under his command not only British but also Chinese, Indians, Eurasians, Malays and Gurkhas, together with soldiers from subject-territories as far afield as Nyasaland, Kenya, Fiji and Sarawak.

Within the British Commonwealth, divide and rule is an old-established principle; if the Kikuyu are being troublesome in Kenya, then the British there use the Masai and other tribes organised in the Kenya African Police against them. In South Africa, the Minister for Economic Affairs, Mr. Louw, warns the Cape Coloured people against joining with the Bantu, "because the millions of Africans would show them no mercy." If the various groups within the working class were not kept mutually hostile, the power of the ruling class would no longer be secure.

The Catch-cry of "Democracy"

Elsewhere in the message, President Eisenhower refers to "the freedom that we cherish and defend," the troops "holding the line of freedom" and so on. Mr. Eisenhower was thinking particularly of Korea, which, he said, was "for Americans the most painful phase of Communist aggression throughout the world." It is a pity that the President did not go more deeply into the nature of the freedom that is being defended in South Korea. A cynic might say that it seems to consist in the freedom of the South Korean capitalists to do what the American ruling class tells them. It is difficult to find traces of any other kind of freedom in South Korea. In a special article appearing in two parts in *The Times* (January 13th and 14th) we read that last summer in particular the President, Dr. Syngman Rhee "was behaving as if he alone were the State and all his critics traitors":

"When Dr. Rhee failed to convince that body (the National Assembly) of the wisdom of his proposed reforms he resorted to direct measures which ultimately brought the reluctant legislators to heel. These measures included the temporary imposition of martial law on Pusan and its vicinity and the detention by the police of more than 50 members of the Assembly on one pretext or other. Most of them were released two days later, but 12 Assemblymen were kept in custody for some weeks."

Under its present regime, the article continues, the Republic is potentially a "police state," but the claim is made that the United Nations have had some success "in fostering the beginnings of democratic practice" in Korea. The *beginnings* of democratic practice! Our rulers did not tell us in 1950, when the war broke out, that we should fight in order to be able to acclaim the beginnings of democratic practice two and a half years afterwards.

But the allegations of the rulers of the Western bloc in June, 1950, that South Korea was a democracy were all of a piece with many other speeches, all of which are designed to fortify the Western case in the eyes of the working class by maintaining that "our" allies are all democracies. True, it is often difficult to square this contention with the facts, as in the case of

Yugoslavia, which by its break with the Cominform in 1948 was suddenly transformed from a likely enemy to a likely ally. Clearly, there was no change in the system of government in Yugoslavia, nor has there been since. But the attempt to show that Yugoslavia's dictatorship is, in some obscure way, not so objectionable as Russia's dictatorship goes on. Speaking in New Delhi on January 5th, Mr. Attlee said: "Marshal Tito is moving on the way to democratic Socialism. They have revolted against Communism, which shows that they are on the way." With all respect to Mr. Attlee, all that the Yugoslav revolt against the Stalinists shows is that Marshal Tito must now, for reasons of propaganda, be said to be on the way towards democracy—a very different thing. Evidence of any move towards political democracy in Yugoslavia continues to be conspicuous by its absence.

Some of the more outspoken American leaders now make no attempt to persuade us that some of the countries in the Western bloc are democracies. General Willoughby, who was General MacArthur's chief of intelligence in the Far East, returned to the U.S. on January 20th from a visit to Spain, and said that "Spain is indispensable to the defence of Western Europe, and would be a reliable and efficient ally" (*The Times*, 22-1-53). "Any criticism of forms of government," he said, "should be ignored." This must have sounded strangely in a country the leaders of which have spent so much time recently on making speeches which consisted largely of just that. What General Willoughby really meant was that any criticism of forms of government in "friendly" countries should be ignored. The only criteria the general was prepared to apply were whether a Government was solvent and lived up to its obligations. General Willoughby was at least frank; he said out loud what the American Government is thinking—as can be seen from the six-day courtesy visit, from January 9th to 15th, paid by 35 American warships to Spanish ports, this being the biggest contingent of American ships to visit Spain since 1929.

Who are the aggressors?

If it can no longer be maintained that the Western bloc chooses its allies on the grounds of the form of government they happen to have, it is impossible also to assert convincingly that the chief aim of the Anglo-American rulers is the defeat of aggression. Acts of non-Stalinist countries which are clearly aggressive are passed over in silence, and the invaded countries are left to defend themselves or submit as best they can. Conversely, acts of Stalinist countries which seem to come under no known definition of aggression are stigmatised as "invasions."

Under the first head come such acts as the invasion of Hyderabad by India. If it is objected that this invasion was speedily successful, and that it would be hard now to reverse a *fait accompli*, one can only point to the continuing aggression of the Chinese Kuomintang forces in Burma, where they are harassing a Government which already has its hands full with rebellions of its own subjects. Under the second head, President Eisenhower, in his message to Congress, accuses the Chinese of "invading Korea"—not only South Korea, it is worth noticing. Thus the Chinese and the American ruling classes, both of which were invited to

send troops to Korea by the Government of that part of Korea which was friendly to them, accuse the other side, which did exactly the same thing, of "invading Korea." "Aggression" is no longer an objective term, but a subjective one; it describes not the event alleged to have occurred, but the political opinions of the speaker.

The final blow to the theory that the Americans were in Korea because of the moral guilt of the North Koreans, who, it is said, began the war, and its corollary that if the South Koreans had invaded North Korea the Americans would have defended the latter against the former, came last November 3rd. On that day of disillusionment the Foreign Minister of South Korea, Mr. Y. T. Pyun, said that before June, 1950, the South Korean Government had every intention of invading North Korea as soon as they had built up a sufficient arsenal of armaments; but that the North Koreans had built up their forces first, and had therefore forestalled the planned invasion by the South Korean troops. Even accepting the contention that the North Koreans were in fact the aggressors in 1950, it is scarcely possible now to deny that the moral guilt of the two sides is equal. The "aggression" has, by this admission, become less a question of guilt than a matter of

efficiency in building a large army first.

The "fair wage" fallacy

In that part of the State of the Union Message dealing with home affairs, President Eisenhower shows himself just as deluded by current fallacies as any of his predecessors. He said that "American labour and American business can best resolve their wage problems across the bargaining table." Here the President perpetuates the belief that there is a "solution to wage problems." This idea calls for a direct negative. There is no solution to wage problems under the capitalist system. There is a solution to the problem of wages: and it is called Socialism. What worker will ever be satisfied with less than all the fruits of his labour? And what capitalist could remain in business if he conceded this demand? So long as there is capitalism, there will be wage problems; and this applies whatever label you choose to tie on the capitalist system operating in any particular country, whether you call it "Communism" or "New Deal" or "Welfare State" or any other attractive name.

President Eisenhower will find that he can as little solve wage problems over the bargaining table as he could by arbitration tribunals.

A.W.E.

A SYMPATHETIC OPPONENT OF SOCIALISM

Reply to a Critic

IN the *South London Press* there appears a regular feature written by "Wanderer," in which he comments on correspondence received. Our comrades Hilbinger and "Standard Socialist" have recently had extracts of their letters dealt with, though we think that not even "Wanderer" himself would claim that he has done justice to the socialist point of view. However, the comments and objections of this critic are fairly typical of those made by the more sympathetic inquirers to our case, so we shall examine a few of his points.

"I too, look forward to production for use, not profit, but as that will not be for centuries I say let's make the best of what we have."

Production solely for use sounds all right, thinks "Wanderer"—and, of course, it is very seldom that anyone is rash enough to assert that Socialism as a way of life is undesirable. What they do is to relegate it to the future—"centuries," "thousands of years," "not in my lifetime," etc. Irrespective of the length of time, the principle behind the argument is the same. And the answer of the socialist is the same. If Socialism is possible in the future, but not now, what happens in the meantime to make it possible?

Since Socialism is a system of society which replaces Capitalism, another system of society, then the change must be a social one, brought about by *people*. They withdraw their support from Capitalism when they cease making excuses, no matter how plausible and popular, for supporting it. At some stage people say: "We've tried making the best of what we have, and it isn't good enough. Let's have something better than what we have." Socialists ask: what's wrong with saying that now—today?

"I think the S.P.G.B. really dislike all reforms that help to reconcile people to capitalism and in a capitalist system, that is all reform. They cannot recruit many members from contented bodies of workers."

This is a gross distortion of the socialist attitude to reforms. We hold that reforms are inseparable from Capitalism. We can no more dislike reform than we can dislike non-reform, i.e. conservatism. To do so would be on a par with disliking buying and, at the same time, approving of selling.

Reconciling people to Capitalism is an activity indulged in by all who are not socialists, including "Wanderer." What is really meant by being "contented"? Surely it is a human attribute to wish to act upon one's environment in order to improve it, and that means being discontented with its present state. Socialists are not in the position of fomenting discontent—we just want the discontent that is there to be constructive.

Then "Wanderer" doubts whether the S.P.G.B. ever criticises the theories of Marx and Engels:

"In fact the S.P.G.B. hold that Marx and Engels described Socialism once for all, and that every other version is wrong."

Nothing could be farther from the truth. Neither Marx nor Engels would "write recipes for future cookshops." They made certain tentative suggestions about the nature of socialist society, and Marx went so far as to assert that the material transformation of the economic conditions of its production "can be determined with the precision of a natural science." But in no sense can any of their writings on Socialism (and remember they were preoccupied with analysing Capitalism) be called describing it once for all.

Marx and Engels were not infallible—nor is the S.P.G.B., which disagrees with them on a number of questions. We think they were wrong in their support of certain so-called defensive wars, though we appreciate the historical conditions that made such support seem consistent with the advocacy of Socialism.

May we ask a favour of "Wanderer" and others

who waver in their affection for the case for Socialism? To those who misrepresent us we give the benefit of the doubt, whenever possible, and assume that they *do not know*. But when people profess some sympathy with our ideas, and are willing to discuss with us, we think that they should make extra efforts to see our point of view.

S.R.P.

GERMANY CALLING!

NATION shall speak peace unto Nation." This historic phrase was at one time the slogan of the B.B.C. and occurred on all their official papers. Perhaps it still does, but we doubt if they now believe it, even if they ever did. To-day owing to Germany not being successful in winning the last war they are not allowed to broadcast to us in English and give us their views direct, presumably in case they infect us with some of their warlike ideas. The B.B.C. can, however, broadcast to them, and no opportunity is lost in endeavouring to capture their sympathy and influence their opinions.

Apart from the external propaganda which is pumped into Germany by every country which surrounds her, including the two big giants U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. and the two somewhat shrunken giants of yesterday, Britain and France, most of the aerial word warfare that goes on over Germany is the ceaseless East-versus-West stuff.

When the war ended, the allied controlled Western zones were not only the larger geographically, but also contained about two thirds or more of the total population. Before the advancing Russians the Germans retreated by the million, but in the West after the allies had crossed the Rhine they knew it was all up and surrendered, thereby remaining where they were, where they lived and belonged. This had many repercussions, for it meant that business in the Western zones could be got going very much quicker. Rough estimates of the division of population were thought to be 50 million Western Germany and 25 millions Eastern zone, although U.N.O. gives 48 million Western Germany and 17 millions Eastern zone; with a further 3,300,000 in Berlin.

Since the stumps of war were pulled up, there has been a steady migration from the East to the West, and as far as we know without any corresponding movements in the other direction. It has been estimated that many millions have transferred from East to West. Hundreds of thousands of German prisoners who were in captivity in the West, or allied countries, did not return to the Eastern zone if they were from there. The hatred of the Russians, made decidedly worse by all the Nazi propaganda, caused a scramble towards the West.

It would appear that the bulk of the industry is in the West, the Rhur, Lower Rhine heavy industry, Essen, Duisburg, Dusseldorf, and the Hamburg area, etc., not to mention the yet undecided Saar province. Western Germany has potentialities which can be developed and which has already come into competition with Britain and U.S. on the export market. So far

they have been acquitting themselves very well and some former competition with England in the export of coal, machinery and motor cars has already made itself felt. But they want to export arms which so far they are not allowed to make.

While Germany has been rapidly building up in the West, there has developed an unemployment problem partly owing to the vast numbers that have swarmed in from the East. On the other hand the East claims to have no unemployment at all.

All this economic background has given rise to an immense amount of radio propaganda which one can hear any night from both Eastern and Western sections of Berlin who scream at one another news bulletins and talks on political and economic affairs until three or four o'clock in the morning. If this means hearing both sides of the question, then the Berliners are especially favoured, but what are they saying?

Firstly the Western zones request the return of the 100,000 German prisoners alleged to be still held by the Russians. When Vishinsky at the recent U.N.O. conference refused to accept the Indian proposals to end the Korean deadlock on repatriation of prisoners of war, the West lost no time in informing them that their argument that prisoners must be sent back to the country they belong or it is desertion on part of the soldiers applied also to the 100,000 Germans still in Russian camps. The Eastern zone never mentions the affair nor attempts to reply, nor indeed does the Western zone reply to what it doesn't want to for that matter.

The Eastern propaganda is all for "PEACE," with capital letters, against the Anglo-American Imperialism which Chancellor Adenauer is supposed to support. The words peace, freedom, nationalism, occur in every sentence, just as they did with the speeches of Hitler and his gang. The additional word "Patriotism" also adulterates almost every sentence. The Western zones can do their bit of it, but there is far less of the real chauvinistic stuff in which Russia has now definitely surpassed the Nazis at their best. One frequently hears a speaker from the Eastern zone screaming in a high pitched voice, reminiscent of Hitler, calling for German unity, national pride and patriotism; thumping the table and with all the melodramatic way employed by Adolf, and denouncing the Anglo-American Imperialism with such vehemence which seems strange alongside his peace appeals, and freedom propaganda.

Adenauer is always being exposed as anti-German, anti-patriotic, anti-nationalistic by the champions of the East, never that he is anti-working class. The Russians, with almost a sense of humour, have called Eastern Germany the "German Democratic Republic," but as

they ruthlessly suppress any independent opposition the elections there are the same farce as in Russia. They have permitted the Germans to have their own "National Hymn" which calls on Germany as the "Fatherland to unite so that they can slay enemies of the people and then the sun will shine over Germany as never before." No mention is made of whom these enemies are supposed to be. The tune of this national hymn resembles those of the Salvation Army in their "Come to Jesus" stuff.

In Western Germany, recently, permission has been given by the allies (after many requests), to use the old favourite "Deutschland über Alles" tune again. The words have been slightly altered. It now becomes "Unity, justice, and freedom, for the Fatherland, let us strive with heart and hand." They don't promise or recommend peace, unity, or the slaying of enemies, as the old Deutschland über Alles did, and as the Eastern Hymn now does. These anthems are sung with great vigour at the close of each radio performance, and in the case of the Eastern zone, all three verses are often

sung before the programme has finished and again at the end, so much do they love it.

Russia always refers to the last war as the great Patriotic War, and not World War II. They have grafted this idea on to the Germans, or those who are left in their sections. There is always room in a vacuum for such ideas.

Recently a new political party has started in Western Germany (one starts about every month, and many have a Hitler flavour about them, and gets itself quickly suppressed). The new party is against the re-arming of Germany and against having anything to do with past or future wars or treaties with any nation. Britain and America in the West and Russia in the East will see to it that this idea does not interfere with their plans for re-arming Germany, so that they can form the front lines for their respective powers. Germany is now somewhat in the same position as Palestine of old, sandwiched between the hammer and the anvil of Babylon and Egypt.

H. JARVIS.

CRUELTY TO CHILDREN

AT the present day and under the existing system of society, various problems arise in connection with children to which apparently no solution can be found. During the early part of 1952, the Daily Press featured some alarming cases of cruelty to children and the Public waxed eloquent on the subject of suitable punishments and deterrents for the offenders. At the moment the "cosh boy" is news, but the former evil has not abated. A recently published book on the subject contains some startling cases of cruelty and neglect, statistics showing causes, and suggestions for remedies—"Cruelty to Children" by Dr. Eustace Chesser. (Gollanz, London, 1951).

Dr. Chesser's investigations lead him to the conclusion that children are ill-treated firstly because their parents do not want them owing to circumstances in their home or emotional life. Secondly, because the parents are of low-grade mentality. Other contributing factors he lists as bad housing and poverty. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children published figures for 1950 showing an increase in the number of cases and it is quoted that one child in 16 is brought to the attention of the Society. Dr. Chesser examines the causes and points out that, paradoxical as it may seem, in a primitive community cruelty to children is less likely to happen than in a "city civilisation." Among so-called "backward" countries it is comparatively rare. He also stresses that the chances are that the ill-used and neglected child of today will be the cruel parent of the next generation. There is a greater likelihood that a home will be "good" if there is a sufficient income to secure release from financial worry and physical drudgery. Dr. Chesser says that "Neglect, which is far more common than cruelty is mainly caused through the reaction upon reasonably normal parents of intolerable conditions . . . and just as cruelty or neglect may be the parents' expression of dissatisfaction and revolt against life so the child expresses his by some kind of misdemeanor

which brings him before the juvenile court." He says "poverty alone does not cause cruelty or neglect, unless the child is unwanted, when the second pressure brings out tendencies which would otherwise have remained latent." In a case of this description it would seem that the child would be unwanted because of the added strain on the already overburdened finances of the parents, so that poverty could be said to be the prime cause.

Second in Dr. Chesser's list of causes comes the "low intelligence" factor, which occurs with startling frequency in cases of cruelty and neglect. The parents are "not certifiable but their brains are of such poor quality that the understanding of the individual is extremely limited and cannot be much improved by teaching . . . the result of several generations of insufficient food, unhygienic living conditions and sometimes inbreeding." (Italics ours).

The Daily Herald (7-1-53) carries a report of "Britain's problem families." At a conference of Educational Associations it was said: "They live in evil-smelling refuges they call home, callous to each other, callous to their children. Old sacks are often their bed coverings. They have no sex-morals, breed at twice the rate of normal people and are frequently jail-birds."

Dr. Chesser suggests a more balanced education, a training for life and an explanation of the human instincts for both boys and girls, but admits that this is worse than useless if they are "living in slums and have no hope of getting out of them." On the whole, his remedial measures seem curiously inept. An organisation of voluntary or semi-voluntary "sitters-in"—to relieve tension on parents; A Children's Charter implemented by a Government Department; the establishment of a "Service of Youth"; Contraceptive knowledge to be made available to the overburdened or over-fruitful mother; the provision of pre-marital education for prospective parents.

Much good work is no doubt done by the N.S.P.C.C. and voluntary organisations in this field but it is a palliative not a cure of the evils which are rooted in the nature of the present system of society.

Whilst on the subject of children, a report in the *Daily Herald* (2-1-53), gives us a glimpse of further complications and vagaries which may be in store. (Take it with a grain of salt.) At a watch-night service, Dr. William Snow, of Bognor Regis, Sussex, entertained his congregation with a forecast that the time is coming when married couples will need a licence to have a baby. "Every morning," he says, "there are 55,000 new mouths to feed . . . Unless war, pestilence or famine reduce the population the only alternative is babies by licence only and by the authority of a World parliament." Resurrecting the ghost of Malthus, he says, "our most pressing problem is not the third World War, but our over-populated world, and not enough food being grown to feed everyone."

Owing to the peculiarities of the system under which we live, and as past history will show, it does not follow that because people go hungry or starve

there are not the means to produce enough food in the world. Apart from this Dr. Snow is unduly pessimistic; Jose du Castro points out that only one-eighth of the world's agricultural resources are being used. ("Geography of Hunger.")

Bertrand Russell, in his book "The Impact of Science on Society," tries to put the world to rights with a suggested world government and the limiting of population. Each nation to be rationed in food, and each nation to decide its own methods of birth control so that world population becomes stationary or nearly so.

Regarding licences for babies, and purely as a matter of interest, perhaps Dr. Snow will take another psychic squint into the future and tell us what the official attitude would be to those thoughtless young couples, who, with carefree abandon exceed their licence by producing twins, triplets or even quads.

Probably a heavy fine, compulsory sterilisation and all excess production painlessly destroyed.

F.M.R.

TWO SHOCKING BOOKS

YOUR attention, Gentlemen, please. Are any of you interested in a pair of ball-bearing sock suspenders? No? Perhaps some of you would like a chest wig or a combined tooth brush and tongue scraper. No? Well, is anyone suffering from constipation or conjunctivitis; from corns, baldness, body odour, fallen arches, bad breath, night starvation or dandruff? Maybe you have diarrhoea, pyorrhoea or gonorrhoea. Whatever your needs, requirements or fancies, real or imagined, you can bet your last shilling that there is someone prepared to invest a little capital, not primarily for the purpose of satisfying your desires, but in order to collect some profit in the process of satisfying them.

If you have no needs, requirements or fancies, you can still be sure that there is someone ready to kid you or convince you that you do have some. Again with the motive of profit lurking in the rear.

That is the main job of advertising; to so present someones wares to you that you will feel that you must acquire them at all costs. You will be flattered, cajoled, threatened and have the wind put up you. All because it is necessary to sell goods before profit can be realised.

Advertising, although its history may go back well before the advent of the capitalist system, really embarked on its career with the birth of capital. Prior to that, advertisements were little more than announcements of entertainments. Capital, with its ever increasing need to find wider and wider markets, took to advertising like a duck takes to water.

Mr. E. S. Turner has written a book which he calls "The Shocking History of Advertising," published by Michael Joseph, 15s. This book is a study of commercial advertising in newspapers and magazines, on hoardings, on the landscape, on the sky and in the ether. The field is limited to Britain and America and opens in the early years of the 17th century.

Mr. Turner is not a Socialist, but he has obviously

spent much time in research and has unearthed a multitude of facts, information and anecdotes. Mr. Turner bubbles over with humour which makes his book very enjoyable. His object appears to be to make advertising more honest and less nauseous. In the process he has presented us with an interesting and amusing book on one of the sidelights of capitalism.

In a world where profit making is the motive force to production all sorts of rubbish, shoddy and inferior goods are produced. The purpose which such goods will serve is secondary. Whether they serve any purpose at all does not really matter so long as a market can be found for them and a profit realised. The chest wigs and tongue scrapers, etc., mentioned by Mr. Turner are an illustration.

Inferior goods must be presented as equal to superior ones, substitutes must be heralded as of the same, if not greater usefulness than the goods which they replace. The health, wealth and general well-being of the people who buy does not come into the picture from the capitalists' point of view. Patent medicines, for instance, even if not dangerous in themselves, can cause a delay in the time before proper treatment is applied, and thus be a danger. Advertisers can bamboozle workers into collecting all sorts of goods and create the impression that such collections indicate an improved standard of living. With their collections around them, workers can look back on previous generations and imagine themselves better off than their forefathers, losing sight of the fact that their forefathers had things which they have not, and were without things which workers today might have missed with advantage.

Mr. Turner's illustration of an advertising man is interesting. He presents him as a

"... new Jesuit; 'Give me your children before they are five and they are mine forever.' To him all values are different. Fog is not something which delays

trains; it is something which prevents people seeing posters. Words have different meanings; loyalty means always buying the same hair oil. To him a bride is not a young woman on the edge of a great adventure; she is a conditioned consumer, who, by buying the right cosmetics and the right brassiere has captured her man, and who, when she returns from her honeymoon will go into the grocer's and automatically recite those branded names which have been the most loudly dinned into her ears for the last twenty-one years. To him all problems can be solved in terms of advertising. The remedy for absenteeism in the mines is to make miners want more luxuries. He has made women adopt men's habits (smoking, wearing trousers) and now he wants to make men adopt women's habits (using perfume). . . ."

On a previous page he says:

"... the prime object of the advertisers was not to produce these gratifying results (improve the habits of nations); it was to sell more silk, more toothpaste, more disinfectant."

We can add, "with a view to more and more profits."

We can recommend Mr. Turner's book for its well, nay, its fountain of information and for the fun to be obtained from reading it. He explodes many myths and superstitions and lays bare the "fear" type of advertising which makes people suspect all kind of ills, misfortunes and misadventures, and fly, terrified, to the purveyor of some quack cure or solution. He shows the attempts that have been made to make advertising more respectable and reveals how it has now, itself, become a lucrative field for capitalist investment. He rounds it all off with such anecdotes as the one about the American broadcast announcer who, whilst speaking on a sponsored programme, was supposed to say, "Always demand the best in bread," but who spoonerised the phrase.

Wisdom without wit is like polish without spit. Mr. E. S. Turner certainly has wit. In an earlier book of his, "Roads to Ruin, the shocking history of social reform," again published by Michael Joseph, 12s. 6d., he leavens his subject with a superabundance of wit.

The book is divided into ten chapters, each of which deals with the history of a reform that has been enacted during or since the 19th century. Special emphasis is laid upon the opposition to these reforms. Amongst the ten are the stories of the suppression of the use of small boys to climb and sweep chimneys; the struggles of Samuel Plimsoll to achieve what is now known as the Plimsoll line on ships; William Willett's efforts to secure the passing of the Daylight Saving Bill and early attempts to reduce working hours and secure a weekly half-day respite for workers.

The securing of these reforms has called for much courage and sacrifice on the part of those who fought for them. None of them have in the least affected the position of the workers in the capitalist system, but they have removed some of the worst ills and abuses of the system. We raise our hats to most of the men who strived for them. The Socialist Party of Great Britain aims at the abolition of the system that gave rise to the need for these reforms and, in consequence cannot admit into its ranks anyone whose political objective falls short of that aim. It does not advocate reforms because it is a revolutionary and not a reformist party. That does not prevent us from recognising the merit of many reformers and the value of their work in easing the sufferings of millions of workers.

The attitude of the church, the aristocracy and the vested capitalist interests in their opposition to almost every reform that has been proposed is illuminating. Again, as in his other book, Mr. Turner has delved into numerous archives and sources of information and has collected for us much useful and interesting material.

When the Ten Hours Bill was under discussion, Nassau Senior made the most painstaking calculations to show that the whole of a capitalist's net profit was derived from the last hour of work of his employees. If their working hours were reduced, he claimed, all that profit would go. Peel and Cobden thought likewise. Malthus said that the workers were lucky to be employed at all and doubly lucky to be employed for such long hours.

Samuel Plimsoll spent most of his life and a lot of his fortune in an endeavour to prevent shipowners from sending over-loaded, unseaworthy, over-insured ships to sea. The story of Plimsoll's campaign, as unfolded by Mr. Turner, reveals some appalling instances of wanton waste of working class life in the interests of capitalist shipowners' profits.

In some instances there were men who, whilst advocating the reform of one particular abuse, defended to the utmost other evil aspects of capitalism. Sometimes they were activated by their own profit making interests and at other times by a desire to embarrass or overthrow political rivals. The church dignitaries in the House of Lords are shown in a very foul light by Mr. Turner's researches.

The author brings into play the same talent for wit, satire, sarcasm and humour that makes his book on advertising so enjoyable. Opposite the title page of his book appears a drawing by David Low of the character, Colonel Blimp, in a fighting attitude with a bath brush, with the caption, "Gad, sir, reforms are all right as long as they don't change anything."

W. WATERS.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

AT

CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1

Friday, Saturday and Sunday,

APRIL 3rd, 4th and 5th

Commencing each day at 11 a.m.

Conference Social and Dance

at

CONWAY HALL,

RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1

SATURDAY, APRIL 4th, at 7.30 p.m.

Admission 3/-

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD



MARCH,

1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

HOPE FOR THE SOCIALIST FUTURE

WE live in a time of great industrial and political change and regrouping of world capitalism. At the same time as the formerly Colonial and backward countries join the race to industrialise and to mechanize agriculture, the Western countries, under the pressure of the emergence of preponderating Russian and American power, tentatively move towards the formation of bigger groupings, such as the European Schumann coal and iron plan, which will provide a large enough industrial power and home market to give them survival in this world of giants. Similar aims and ambitions stir the governing circles of China, India, the Middle East states and the Argentine—the latter with its scheme for a United States of South America.

Lagging behind but inevitably stirred out of passivity are the working class of the different countries. Even without fully appreciating what is going on they cannot fail to realise that great changes and great dangers are involved.

One question that worries public men in Europe and America and that finds its echo among the workers is whether, along with the adoption of the technique of capitalist industry the emerging Powers especially the Asiatic ones will accept Western political systems and traditional religious and other ideas. The historian Arnold Toynbee in his talks on the wireless (reprinted as "The World and the West") has given his view that the West seems to have nothing else to offer that will be acceptable, and that as a consequence Western ideas are losing to the more attractive propaganda of Russian Imperialism disguised as sympathy for colonial independence movements.

The European Labour parties, through the reformed Socialist International, are hoping to find an answer to the question posed by Toynbee by offering to Asiatic workers the attractions of democratic political methods together with social reforms though it is

evident that Toynbee himself doubts whether this appeal has anything like the inspiring quality that alone could secure a response.

Mr. W. J. Brown, former Labour M.P., who turned Independent before losing his seat, writes in the *Daily Mail* (February 20th, 1953) giving his reading of the situation. He takes the view that the propaganda of the Russian Government and Communist parties is losing its appeal both in East and West because of a number of factors, among them the rise of the rival Tito brand of "Socialism," the gain of independence by many of the former colonies, and the discovery by countries within the Russian sphere of influence that being a colony of Russia is just like being a colony of

Mr. Aneurin Bevan, not to be left out, manages to combine an admiration for Tito and support for the any other capitalist Power.

British-American alliance with the suggested solution that British capitalism should line up with India and other countries in a bloc of "peace-lovers" able to inspire the confidence of workers everywhere.

One thing, however, they all leave out of account and for an inescapable reason. They none of them even wonder whether perhaps there is in the Socialist idea something that will form an inspiring common bond for workers everywhere.

They omit to do so because all of them, including the Labourites and Mr. Bevan, have no belief themselves in the value and practicability of the Socialist idea.

Here then is the solution to the problem studied, but not understood, by Mr. Toynbee. Alone among all of the contestants the Socialist movement has something to offer that when fully grasped will be as welcome to the workers of China, Russia, India and Africa as it will to the workers of Europe and the New World, the idea of international co-operation in a Socialist world designed to meet the needs of the human race on the basis of production solely for use. Only the Socialist can genuinely meet the inhabitants of all countries in a spirit of fraternity, addressing them not across barriers of social privilege and a wall of bayonets but in full equality.

PRELIMINARY NOTICE OF

PUBLIC MEETING

at

ST. PANCRAS TOWN HALL,

EUSTON ROAD, N.W.1 (Nr. St. Pancras Station)

SUNDAY, 12th APRIL, at 7.30 p.m.

WHICH WAY TO PEACE?

ANNUAL CONFERENCE RALLY

in

LARGE CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE

SUNDAY EVENING, APRIL 5th at 7 p.m.

London and Provincial Speakers on Platform. All welcome.

SLINGS AND ARROWS

"A Daniel come to Judgement"

It is one thing for the more sensational section of the popular press to support the re-imposition of flogging for the effective suppression of crime. That can be dismissed as pandering to the lowest common denominator of Public taste. If it can be said that literature has any effect on the incidence of crime one has only to look at the columns of the popular press to find not merely news reportage of sex and other crimes, but also serial stories in which rape, and arson and murder occur in every instalment. Full-bosomed females are depicted in various stages of undress. Coshboys are shown lurking in the shadows with weapons upraised waiting to pounce on unsuspecting victims. There is a general trend in journalism towards this kind of nauseating pornography, garnished of course with a few high-sounding moral leading articles on the degeneracy of spiritual values.

It is quite another thing though, when the Lord Chief Justice whose entire function is to weigh evidence and decide accordingly, lends his support to the lash and the birch. While we have no doubt that his legal pronouncements and judgments are impeccable and arrived at impartially and without equivocation, his views on punishment are as unsound as a leaky barrel. Like most of his predecessors he is against any kind of leniency and has expressed his views forcibly on the efficacy of the Lash. When he spoke on this subject in the House of Lords, he was effectively answered by the Lord Chancellor speaking for the Government. But since then he has made many statements on the subject which show that in this matter he is like the Bourbons "who remember everything and learn nothing."

Presiding recently over a case in which two youths were charged with robbery with violence he told them before pronouncing sentence that what they needed was a "good thrashing," and that they were no doubt "treated as mother's darlings." It transpired subsequently that one of them had been regularly beaten by his father an ex-army Sergeant, who, like the Lord Chief Justice, was a firm believer in corporal punishment.

There then appeared before the Lord Chief Justice a man charged with robbery with violence, who had, once before, committed a similar offence for which he had received a flogging. Did this abash his Lordship or give him pause for thought? On the contrary, for we next hear from the headmaster of a Home Office reform school who complained that although the Lord Chief Justice had told a youth that he needed a "caning," that boy had been previously caned several times at the school. At this stage logical people might well consider whether physical punishment is an effective answer to crime.

It is notorious that most judges have opposed reforms in the penal code. When it was suggested that hanging might well be abolished as a punishment for sheep stealing, the judges rose in a body and forecast widespread doom and anarchy. It was abolished but the doom and anarchy did not follow. When Bentley was hanged, newspapers announced that had he been reprieved it would have set a premium on the shooting of policemen. Within a fortnight of the hanging a

policeman was shot at and wounded!

Flogging is no answer nor is the employment of the Public Hangman at his grisly trade. Psychology cannot meet the case. And those Labour M.P.s concerned in the abolition of toy weapons are merely playing with the issue and reducing it to absurdity. Crime cannot and will not be abolished while the exploitation of man by man, and its resultant wars and poverty and frustrations, continue.

Tinkling Cymbals

Moved by the widespread devastation and suffering caused by the recent floods, thousands of people sent help and clothing to such an extent that there was enough left over to send to the sufferers in Holland. The House of Clergy, similarly moved, passed a resolution asking that collections taken in the churches on the first Sunday in Lent should be donated to the Flood Relief Fund. This was an appropriate gesture, for Lent is a period of fasting and abstinence for devout Christians. But while the House of Clergy was thus moved, higher and wiser counsels prevailed.

At a meeting of the Church Assembly, the Archbishop of Canterbury announced that while he had "sympathy" with the sufferers, he "thought it a dangerous precedent for the Church Assembly moved by great emotion, to pass resolutions" of such a character. He felt that these matters were better left to the natural instincts of the people "guided by their clergy." (Italics ours.) Note that it is the people whose instincts he relies on. Note that when it is a question of the church giving up a share of its income it becomes a "dangerous precedent." Let no harsh cynic proclaim the famous words "though I speak with the tongues of men and of Angels and have not charity I am become as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal." His Grace is putting first things first.

If the church establishes such a precedent there might be all kinds of similar appeals and before long every collection taken in churches would be donated to this or that appeal, and the Church left with nothing. And what a serious pass we would then reach, for the Church would have nothing left with which to spread its belief in mercy and righteousness and charity, because those who had listened had acted upon these precepts, and called the bluff.

Dangerous Comparisons

A great deal of attention has been focussed on a footballer who has had the misfortune to lose a leg, as the result of an accident on the playing field. He is a professional footballer and the loss of a limb ends his career and any possibility of his continuing as a player. In juxtaposition with this news came the news of an insurance clerk who had the good fortune to win £109,000 on the football pools.

Writing on these events Londoner, who contributes a column each day to the *Evening Standard*, speculates on the sum that the footballer might receive in the form of grants and gifts, and estimates that £10,000 would be the anticipated amount. He compares this with the enormous prize won on the pools and says it is ironic that one man should get so much for marking

a piece of paper, and another so much less for actually playing. This is a dangerous departure for "Londoner." If he starts making such comparisons who knows where he might end. He might even join the Socialist Party.

He has a wide field for comparisons. For example, why should Lady Docker have a gold plated motor car for doing nothing while the wife of a working man cannot even afford a taxi! for her shopping? Why should Sir Bernard Docker have an ocean-going yacht, get dividends from companies whose meetings he hardly attends, while most of his workmen can hardly

afford the hire of a rowing boat? Why, in fact, should the capitalist class have more than enough of everything, security, comfort and leisure, while those who do the work have just enough to keep them going from week to week?

It is indeed a tragedy that a young footballer should lose a limb but it is equally tragic that miners, dockers and the whole working-class should risk its life and safety in peace and war for the benefit and enrichment of the Capitalist class.

S.A.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND

Report of a debate on the motion "That the working class should support the S.P.N.Z. rather than the N.Z.C.P." held at the Unity Centre, Cuba Street, Wellington, July 27th, 1952.

Com. R. H. Everson opened the debate by stating, first, it was necessary to give a brief outline of the S.P.N.Z.s case which differed, fundamentally, from the position taken up by every other political party, including the C.P. The S.P.N.Z. took the attitude that it was necessary for the working class to understand the world it lived in; the working class was faced with the problems of poverty, insecurity, and war, and the working class could not remove these problems until it understood the cause of them. Unfortunately, at the present time, the overwhelming majority of the workers did not understand the system of society in which they lived, and in which they were exploited.

Under capitalism, wealth took the form of commodities, articles which are produced solely for sale on a market with a view to profit. The means of producing wealth—the land, factories, railways, etc., were owned by a small minority of the population, the capitalist class. The working class owned none of the means of production and consequently, was forced to work for those who do own. The worker, in order to live, had to sell the only commodity which he possessed his power to labour. However, the commodity labour-power had a peculiar characteristic not possessed by any other commodity—it could produce a value greater than its own. That value which was produced by the working class, over and above what it was paid in the form of wages, was appropriated by the capitalist class and distributed in the form of rent, interest and profit.

Because the working class was tied to the wages system, it received only the value of its labour-power, which was determined by what was required to maintain it as an efficient working class and to reproduce the next generation of wage-slaves. Hence, the worker's lot was one of poverty amidst plenty. Moreover, the worker was only employed as long as the capitalist could make a profit from his employment. If there was no profit, there was no production, and the worker was out of a job. In order to realise the profits on the wealth produced by the workers, the capitalist class was brought into conflict with the capitalist class in other parts of the world and periodically, therefore, the capitalist world was plunged into war.

The only solution to these problems lay in the abolition of their cause, which was the class ownership

of the means of life. Here Com. Everson defined Socialism as being a system of society based upon the Common ownership and democratic control of the means of producing and distributing wealth by and in the interests of the whole of society. This would enable society to produce things solely for use and thus, remove the exploitation of the working class and the social problems which flowed from that state of affairs. Socialism could only be introduced when the working class understood and wanted it. They would act upon their understanding by, first, gaining a majority in Parliament. There had been people, including the so-called Communists, who had denounced Parliament as useless. However, Parliament controlled the forces of repression, and any alternative action in defiance of the capitalist control of the armed forces was suicidal and doomed to failure. Socialists, in Parliament, would be controlled by a socialist working class which knew what it wanted and how to get it. When the working class understood its position in society, it had no need for leaders, and could not be misled or betrayed.

Until capitalism was removed the working class could not solve its problems—and where the wages system existed, capitalism existed. This applied equally to Russia as to the rest of the world. Where all the features of capitalism existed, as in Russia, so did all its evil effects.

Mrs. Birchfield, for the C.P., began by claiming that the S.P.N.Z. was a "Hotch-Potch" of Social-Democracy and Anarchism. The S.P. did not look at the world realistically it failed to appreciate the most important fact in the world today, viz; that the world was divided into two camps; on the one hand, the world of Socialism, the Soviet Union, the great Chinese peoples' republic, and the new democracies of Eastern Europe and, on the other hand, the world of imperialism led by capitalist America.

The most important task of the working class today was the preservation of Peace since peace was in the best interests of the working class. The workers must fight for peace and must continue their unrelenting struggle against those who are for war. We must get out of Korea. Step up the demand against the imperialists that all troops should be withdrawn from Korea.

We must mobilise the peace-loving peoples throughout the world. If they are organised, they are stronger than the forces of the imperialists and warmongers. What would the S.P. say to the Korean peoples? It would tell them that they must all

become Socialists, before they can have peace.

Then Mrs. Birchfield quoted from Marx to show that Marx, like the C.P., believed in leadership. The C.P. was the leader of the working class, and said that Socialists are made in the process of building Socialism. The S.P. on the other hand, which claimed to be a revolutionary party, wanted Socialism through the ballot box. What would the ruling class do if it felt its position endangered?—would it allow the Socialists to build-up a majority in Parliament and in the country?—No, the ruling class would not surrender its wealth tamely—look what happened in Spain.

The S.P. believed that the class struggle is only a political struggle; it had no trade union policy. That was not to say that its individual members did not join the unions—they did, and some of them have played an honourable part in trade union struggles—but the Party as such, had no attitude towards the trade unions. It

did not see that the reforms won are a means to an end. Neither did the S.P. see that the class struggle began where the worker was exploited, i.e., at the point of production. The bitter struggles of the workers, on the industrial field, taught the worker the nature of the State. The C.P. led the worker in this struggle. The S.P. said that the U.S.S.R. was imperialist. Mr. Everson should go to the Soviet Union in a delegation and see the Soviet system in operation. The C.P. supported the idea of these delegations, so that the workers could learn the truth and counter the lies of the reactionaries about the Soviet Union.

This concluded the opening speeches of the two speakers, after which the chairman allowed questions and discussion from the floor. Members of the audience were limited to two minutes each. At the end of half an hour, the Chairman called upon the two speakers to wind-up the debate for five minutes each.

"SOUTHWARDS FROM CHINA"

(A Survey of South East Asia since 1945," by Woodrow Wyatt, Labour M.P. for Aston, Birmingham)

Published by Hodder & Stoughton, 1952 Price 10/6

The Author has travelled widely in these parts and deals comprehensively with events in the countries south of China since 1945 and also some of their past history. The book does not touch a lot on the conditions of the inhabitants mostly it is a record of the various political leaders, past and present, and the resources of the countries. In the area under review, India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Burma, Siam, French Indo-China, and Malaya, there are "over 600 million people, it stretches six or seven thousand miles around the world. It contains the world's greatest supplies of rubber, tin and jute, besides producing great quantities of palm oil, petroleum oil, ground nuts, spices, rice and minerals of almost every variety."

In the first chapter "Why S.E. Asia matters" we learn that the sterling area could not balance its dollar deficit trade without the goods which come from these areas. Over 90 per cent. of the world's rubber comes from Malaya and Indonesia. British investments in Malaya total between £600 and £1,000 million, and about the same amount is invested in India and Pakistan. The investment in Burma is about £120 million, and there are British investments in Siam and Indonesia.

Yes! S.E. Asia certainly "matters" as the Author expresses it. In addition to this concentration of hard cash, it is widely recognised that since the inception of U.N.O. and the worsening of relations between the Western Powers and the Soviet bloc, the policy has been to maintain a firm footing in S.E. Asia; Food, Medical supplies and loans are forthcoming on the assumption that a native with an "empty belly" is a potential convert to communism. Woodrow Wyatt says that "rearmament in Europe should not be allowed to curtail the economic aid which arms the mind of man in S.E. Asia against succumbing to the arid promises of the Communists."

In passing through he takes a few pot shots at the Conservatives and the book is besprinkled with lashings of praise for the wise policies of the Labour Govern-

ment, particularly in allowing India self government in 1947, thus spiking the Communist guns.

This seems rather like taking credit for a line of action which could hardly have been avoided, "Hobson's choice" in fact. At the end of the last war India was in no mood for further procrastination and it is extremely doubtful whether, Great Britain, no longer the invincible imperial power, was in a position to use force which would appear to be the only alternative. Apart from this, as Woodrow Wyatt points out "the myth of white superiority was shattered in S.E. Asia during the last war . . . The Japanese did more than turn the Dutch out of Indonesia, the British out of Malaya and Burma and the French out of Indo-China. They drove the belief in the invincibility of the European, clean out of the Asian mind. . . . The fear of Communism is still not as great as the memory of subjection to the Western Powers."

The Author suggests understanding, aid and sympathy from the Western Powers to the East and the raising of "abysmally low living standards." He says the West has profited greatly from the East for centuries and must put back something of what has been taken out. "This does not mean that the rewards for the Western countries will not still be great. Indeed they may be greater in the future than they were in the past." Trade with India has greatly increased since she gained her independence.

Woodrow Wyatt thinks that although at the outset Britain ruled selfishly, it is beyond any historian to say whether the British association with India partook more of "selfish imperialism or enlightened tutelage."

We think it is generally recognised that the British educated a small section of the natives to help them in administration but the vast mass of the people could not be said to have received "enlightened tutelage." On page 72 of the book we learn "In India there are still some 100 million people who live permanently between starvation and serious malnutrition and there are another 100 million who get just enough to eat,

but not enough to resist commonplace diseases."

The book gives an account of the rise of British power in India from 1612 when the first trading post was established at Surat, and the birth and growth of the British East India Company. There appears to be some doubt as to whether the imperialist bug bit Warren Hastings first or the British Government of that time. Woodrow Wyatt reports that Warren Hastings (Clive's successor) "Did not wish to see the domination of all India by the East India Coy., it was his aim to form an alliance with neighbouring Indian rulers on conditions of mutual and equal dependence. But events were too much for him and British power swept on in all its majesty."

According to Jose de Castro ("A Geography of Hunger") "Hastings' administrative acts, like Clive's, finally resulted in a Parliamentary summons, but by this time, India had proved so profitable that Parliament, according to a document cited by the historian Gonzalo de Reparaz acknowledged that he had 'acted criminally' but absolved him, because his crimes had been advantageous to England."

Woodrow Wyatt gives an account of the quarrel between India and Pakistan. He devotes a chapter to Burma, called "Success of a bold policy," meaning the transfer of power to Burma by the Labour Government while her internal affairs were in a chaotic condition. After "uncertain beginnings" Burma has proved "capable of running her own affairs; and is voluntarily on the side of the West and as such is a far more potent ally against communism."

Regarding Malaya he thinks that the British should set a time limit on her stay and acceleration towards self Government. He criticises the British officials, who he says are unapproachable and repress instead of helping the natives. At the same time it is pointed out that the "dollar earnings a year are in the neighbourhood of £250 million and are the highest of any country in the sterling area. Without these dollars Britain's dollar-gap could not be bridged. More tin comes from Malaya than any other single place in the world and so does more rubber. . . . That is the measure of Britain's interest in Malaya and of the importance she must attach to keeping Malaya almost by any means in the sterling area." The population on the mainland, leaving out Singapore is five million, made up of Malays, Indians and Chinese. "There are two million Chinese. The Malays, the original inhabitants of the country are only slightly more in number on the mainland and the Indians, about 600,000 make up the remainder." Woodrow Wyatt says that the Hindu religion conflicts with Communism and the great mass of peasants are still deeply religious. The same applies to the Malays, and even the Chinese are by no means "universally fertile ground." He thinks that all three are not drawn to Communism but there is a danger that if we delay too long, they will turn against us. It would be better that "we should help Malaya fight the communist bandits who seek to disrupt her life, than that Malaya should help us fight them." It is doubtful whether the Malay and British soldiers now fighting would understand or appreciate this subtle distinction without a difference.

The Author deplores Mr. Lyttleton's decision that "political progress should be put in cold storage until

the terrorists have been finally defeated" and suggests that Malaya can only be kept on the side of the West if she is treated in the same kind of way that the Labour Government treated India, Pakistan, Ceylon and Burma.

The last chapter "Under the shadow of China" points out that the S.E. Asian countries under review have large numbers of Chinese living in them—"obvious material for a fifth column if required." Lenin is quoted as saying that "Victory of world revolution would be certain, once China, India and Russia were joined in Communism."

Woodrow Wyatt thinks that a "precise and comprehensive statement" should be made to Communist China that aggression against any of the S.E. Asian countries would be dealt with in the same way as the invasion of South Korea. He hopes that aid will be continued to these new-born nations and praises their new Governments "far more democratic than have ever been known in the East, and which are capable of providing internal stability."

One last pat on the back for the ex-Labour Government "Britain can be proud of leaving in S.E. Asia a heritage of democracy and of handing over power in India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon at the right time." Incidentally, the natives of these lands, graciously granted this boon are probably trying to sort out in their minds just what difference it has made to them.

Throughout this book the word "Socialism" is used with carefree abandon to describe the Labour Party's bran-mash of Welfare State and Nationalisation and is extended to parties abroad in the S.E. Asian area who base their policies on the same ideas. This particular brand of "Socialism" is no more like the genuine article than the Russian brand of communism is based on the teachings of Karl Marx.

In 1951, after six years in office the Labour Party was high, dry and gasping for a "new policy." It is true they polled a larger number of votes in the last election but they had no new tricks to pull out of the hat. The workers had realised that Nationalisation did not effect them in any way. So far as they were concerned it was a flop and the net result appeared to be a fixed dividend for shareholders. The Labour Party's policy is to cushion the worst evils of the system and to make it more palatable for the workers; Preserving the present system draws them into the vortex of international trade rivalries, entails recognising the need to protect British capital investments abroad, the necessity of rearmament and the inevitability of war; The present line up of powers being the Western Bloc against the Soviet Union, her satellites and China. Hence Woodrow Wyatt continuously stresses the need for aid to S.E. Asian countries and sees a communist lurking behind every bush.

He is not by any means alone in mis-using the word "Socialist," the majority of the Labour Party's members suffer from the peculiar delusion that they are Socialists; Mr. Attlee, after his recent visit to S.E. Asia to attend the Asian Socialist Conference (Italics ours) wrote in the *Daily Herald* (January 23rd) an article all about the "Socialist leaders of the East." These are counterparts of the Labour Party.

We can't help wishing that all these offenders against the fair name of Socialism could be dumped on

a "slow boat to China," plus a pile of SOCIALIST STANDARDS. They might then learn the real meaning of the word.

We recoil as we contemplate the alternative

possibility, i.e., that the representatives of the Labour Party know what Socialism really is and are wilfully misleading the workers. Perish the thought!

F.M.R.

AN INTRODUCTION TO ECONOMIC HISTORY

MR. G. D. H. COLE'S book (published by Macmillan & Co.) is a survey of the development of capitalism throughout the world since 1750. It is intended "for students of the modern world who want to have a general notion of the economic changes which, over the past two centuries, have transformed the entire way of living for a large section of the world's people and are today spreading to areas which had been little affected by them only a few years ago" (p.1).

Starting with the merchant capitalism of 1750, Mr. Cole describes the development during the following 100 years, of the industrial capitalism which gave Britain supremacy in the markets of the world.

He also traces the industrial development of France and Germany, and the growth of the United States until now she has become the largest exporting and importing country in the world.

The chapters on "Economic Imperialism" and "The Far East," show how the advanced capitalist countries, seeking markets for commodities, sources for raw materials, and spheres for investing the accumulated wealth of the capitalist class, sowed the seeds of capitalism in every corner of the earth, causing conflict between the advanced nations, themselves and also between the advanced countries and the more backward.

Writing on the "Emergence of Russia," Mr. Cole informs us that in Czarist days, "Russian industry grew up under strict state tutelage" (p.121) that, "The State and large private employers alike erected factories which, to a considerable extent, housed their employees and provided such amenities and services as were deemed to be necessary" (p.120). This shows the continuity in the development of Russian State capitalism. He gives another example of this continuity but finds it "difficult to say how far the policies of the Soviet Union since 1945 are to be regarded as the expression of a continued Russian expansionism resting on nationalistic foundations, and how far as logical applications of the theory of Marxism" (p.136).

Of course, Mr. Cole writes from the Labour point of view and the inadequacy of this point-of-view, from a Socialist standpoint, is clearly shown when he describes modern industrial society, and also when he poses the problems of present day capitalism. While he acknowledges the importance of the productive forces in social development, he completely ignores what is known as the relations of production, i.e., the close relations men enter into with each other to use the productive forces. These relations of production distinguish one form of society from another; they also come into conflict with the productive forces and obstruct their further development.

To use the productive forces in capitalist society, the majority of the population must sell their ability to work to the minority who own them. They receive in

return wages, and what they produce more than this allows the minority to live in luxury and increase their investments; it also pays for the institutions required to maintain the system.

But Mr. Cole writes about "mixed systems" and claims that State-ownership is Socialism.

He writes that "When a business or a whole industry is nationalised . . . The capital becomes State-owned; but save where social revolution has brought with it confiscation of the rights of the previous owners, the nationalised business may still have to meet an interest charge for compensation, and, where it has not, the State usually levies a tax on the proceeds of the nationalised service. The employees continue to receive salaries or wages; the managers continue to manage and the supervisors to supervise" (p.145).

The relations of production have not changed; they still remain the same. The majority of the population still have to sell their labour power, and what they produce over and above their wages pays interest on loans, lottery prizes, huge salaries to managers and supervisors; it also pays for the institutions necessary for running the system.

For Mr. Cole the main problems that face the world today are the threat of war and the development of the productive forces in the backward areas.

But to realise the surplus value the workers produce, capitalist nations must compete with each other for markets where goods can be sold and for sources of raw materials; they must also protect the trade routes which are used to transport goods and materials to and from the home country. This rivalry, as we can see is rooted in the relations of production, and it leads to war.

Now we can also see how far Russian expansionism is due to the "logical application of the theory of Marxism."

And as for the development of the productive forces in the backward countries, has the development of the productive forces in the advanced countries solved working class problems? Mr. Cole admits that the "United States with all its growth of productive power, has not abolished poverty within its borders" (p.159).

To abolish the poverty and the insecurity arising from the threat of war we must get rid of those relations of production which lead to war and restrict the full use and further application of those productive forces which are today capable of providing amply for the needs of all.

The present relations of production—the minority having the monopoly of the means of living, and the vast majority having to sell their ability to work—must be replaced by new relations of production; all must have equal access to the means and instruments of production and the wealth produced; the means of living must become the common property of all. J.T.

A PACIFIST CLERGYMAN

The Rev. Cameron Newell, Vicar of St. Peters, Ipswich, must be a sadder and probably a wiser man.

He was appointed rector designate to the Parish of Holbrook, Suffolk. He appeared to be all set to take over when the Holbrook Church Council dropped their bombshell. After considering the appointment they passed a resolution which said quite bluntly "Mr. Newell is not acceptable." The reason given was that he is a pacifist.

They argued that there is an R.A.F. training camp in the district and to send Mr. Newell there would be like sending a teetotaler to Burton-On-Trent. We are aware that the Church is in a bad way, but this statement seems to beat the lot. We would have thought that a God-fearing brewer would have been unconcerned as to whether or not the preacher was adept at pint swallowing as long as the sermons were uplifting. It only goes to show to what lengths the Church will go to retain its flock. The Bishop, Dr. Richard Brook, gave his support to the Church Council, and advised Mr. Newell to withdraw. The appointment was subsequently cancelled.

This case illustrates the confusion that there is among Christians on the question of war. Whatever the ideas of the hierarchy of the Church may be, sincere, or insincere, it cannot be denied that the bulk of practising Christians are honest in their beliefs, and that their actions in wartime are consistent with those beliefs. We find that when war occurs most of them will give support to their governments in prosecuting the war, because they believe that justice is on their side. Hundreds of thousands of them signed their names, giving support to peace movements in the years between the two World wars, and pledged that if war came they would oppose it. Yet when war did come they felt that they had to support it because nothing else could be done. On the other hand a small proportion of them, and Mr. Newell is one of these, have maintained their opposition, and believe that war is "un-Christian" because it conflicts with the teachings of Jesus Christ, justifying their attitude by giving numerous quotations from the Bible which appear to condemn war, though other passages taken from the same source show that support for war can equally be justified. So to begin with, the pacifist is on rather weak ground when he argues that his attitude is in line with Christian teaching.

Pacifism as a Solution

The Christian pacifist believes that it is only through the "grace of God" that an individual can possess the "fine instincts" and "high motives" which the Christian possesses. Non-Christians (it must follow) are incapable of these attributes because they "ignore" God. The pacifists hope for a better World with an absence of war, and believe that this can be secured by adhering to what they believe to be the teachings of Jesus Christ, and, by setting this example, encourage others to follow suit.

To accept this argument it would have to be accepted that all non-Christians are ready and eager to go to war at any time. An examination of the facts shows that this is not the case. In the last World war the vast majority of those who went in the armed forces

were conscripted, and a good many of those who volunteered, did so because they were allowed to choose the particular branch of the services they preferred, whereas if they held back they would have to take pot luck.

It is apparent that no one wants war, not even the capitalist class. All are apprehensive about it before it comes. The capitalists will only resort to war when it appears to them that nothing else can be done.

The Causes of War

Capitalists must sell the goods produced by the workers or cease to exist as capitalists. Many of them are left behind in the scramble and go under. They must be constantly on the look-out for new markets, or trying to improve, or re-capture old ones. Prices must be competitive, and this means that wages must be kept at the lowest possible level without endangering efficiency. For successful operation in World markets cheap raw materials are essential, and it follows that there must be a struggle over the sources of supply of these raw materials. The various national groups organise to obtain control of the areas where they are to be found. Success in this objective is impossible without large and well equipped armies, navies, and air forces. Behind the armed forces are the scientists and technicians, and the high industrial organisation, all marshalled, almost wholly in wartime and partially in peacetime for the protection of "our interests" in other parts of the World.

There should be little wonder that the respective governments of this country and the U.S.A. are getting worked up when they see Russia extending its frontiers in Europe; and in Asia, obviously working to establish control, or at least to gain influence which will aid Russia. This is especially noticeable where China is concerned.

China, a vast country with a population of over 400 millions, is undergoing economic change which must result in a more effective utilisation of its immense mineral resources in the near future. The Statesman's Year Book for 1945 gives the following information. China is rich in coal, iron, gold, copper, lead, zinc, silver, mercury, and tin, (the latter being its most important mineral export). Since 1908 the country has produced 60 per cent of the World's antimony, and now produces 70 per cent of the World's tungsten. These facts are enough to excite the interests of the major powers, especially so as they realise that there is the prospect of a large increase of imports into China of machinery and other manufactured goods, because of the process of industrialising the country.

Who Plans and Pays for War?

The planning, preparing, and carrying on of war is the work of governments acting in the interest of the capitalist class they represent. The cost of war is borne by the capitalist class, who are quite prepared to allow themselves to be heavily taxed to meet the costs. The workers are not consulted or told about the issues involved for the very good reason, that they have no interest in these things. In fact their minds have to be conditioned by intensified propaganda which we are all familiar with in wartime. We are led to believe that there is something which vitally affects our interests,

such as "our freedom" or "our way of life," or that democracy is at stake. Most workers accept war when it comes, because accepting capitalism, they know of no alternative. Socialists understand the system and know why wars are fought; that whilst the interests of the various sections of the capitalist class are vitally affected by the winning or losing of wars, workers do not benefit one way or the other, on the contrary many pay with their lives.

The Socialist Solution

The interest of the workers can only be served by abolishing capitalism and establishing socialism. Under this system there will be no markets for the capitalists to struggle over, because without an owning class, production will be for use only. The World will be the common heritage of us all with freedom to come and go as we please. With the causes of war removed the people will go forward planning what is best for them all, because their interests will be common, and all restricting influences, common to capitalism, will be removed.

Mr. Newell and his fellow pacifists are opposed to socialism, because they are not in favour of the class conflict which must result from the carrying on of the present social system. They are therefore in the illogical position of supporting the capitalist system, which causes war and the class conflicts, and objecting to the inevitable consequences. What they do not understand is that there can be no harmony between the exploiters and the exploited, or between capitalist and capitalist, and that the logical thing to do is to abolish the conditions which give rise to the conflicts. The work of the Socialist is to spread the ideas of Socialism, knowing that eventually they will be accepted because there is no other solution.

G. KERR.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Several Indoor meetings and debates are being held in March and April to wind up the winter propaganda season, prior to the holding of outdoor meetings which will re-commence in April.

Fulham Branch have put in a great amount of work in preparation for the debate at Kensington Town Hall on Monday, March 16th, and members and sympathisers are asked to make a special note of the details.

St. Pancras Town Hall is the venue for a meeting on Sunday, April 12th. In view of the success of the two previous meetings held during 1952, and in the light of the experience gained in organising them, it is hoped that this meeting on April 12th will surpass the others in results and attendance.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE will be held as usual at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 3rd, 4th and 5th (Easter). Business commences each day at 11 a.m. On the Saturday evening a reunion Social and Dance will be held in the large hall. The usual Conference Rally will be held there on the Sunday evening. Please make a note of these dates and arrangements, as being early in April, the April SOCIALIST STANDARD might not be available to all in time.

P.H.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

A correspondent (Mr. C. E. Berry) has written criticising a paragraph in the September issue (Page 130) in which the net yield of £800 a year on the investment of £4,250 in the purchase of 12 caravans was described as nearly 19 per cent. He points out that net yield in this case does not allow for tax at 9s. 6d. in the £ and does not allow for replacement of the caravans, the life of which our correspondent puts at 10 years. While it is arguable that the "life" should be put at more than 10 years, thus reducing the annual amount for replacement, it is true that the yield of 19 per cent. was an over estimate.

ED. COMM.

HEAD OFFICE SUNDAY MEETINGS

at 7.30 p.m.

March 8th "Capitalism and Medicine"—H. Jarvis.
.. 22nd "Scientific Aspects of Socialism"—W. Kerr.

SPEAKERS' CLASS

Head Office,
Sundays at 3.30 p.m.
A. Turner.

MEETINGS AT DENNISON HOUSE

Vauxhall Bridge Road (near Victoria Station),
on Sundays at 7 p.m.

Sunday March 1st: Debate, "Anarchism v. Socialism."
For S.P.G.B.—A. Turner.
For Anarchists—P. Sanson.
Sunday March 15th: Title to be announced—A. Turner.

WEST HAM BRANCH LECTURES

at Salisbury Road School, Manor Park Broadway, E.12
(Near "Earl of Essex").

Thursdays at 8 p.m.

March 12th: "Culture and the Industrial Revolution"—E. Kersley.
March 26th: "The Chinese Revolution"—F. Offord.

BLOOMSBURY BRANCH LECTURE

at
Conway Hall (Small Hall), Red Lion Square, W.C.1
Wednesday, 18th March at 7.30 p.m.
"The Geography of Hunger"
Speaker: J. D'arcy

ISLINGTON BRANCH LECTURE

at
Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road,
8 p.m.
on Thursday, 12th March
"Socialism and Psychology"
E. Wilmott

ECONOMICS CLASS

An Economics Class will be held at Head Office on Mondays, at 7.30 p.m., starting 2nd March. It will deal with theoretical aspects of Marxian economics and attempt to relate them to current issues of capitalism. Tutors, E. Wilmott and E. Hardy.
E. Wilmott, Organising Tutor.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common owner ship and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month at 7.15 p.m., at Kingsley Hall, Old Market Street, Bristol. Secretary: J. Flowers, 8, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 11th and 25th Feb., 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in each month at Co-op Club, "Oakfield", Bilton Road., at 7.30 p.m. Correspondence to C. Walsh, 76 Railway Terrace, Rugby.

SWANSEA.—D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Fortman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (nr. "Met" Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180 Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hallard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.15.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Peters London Road, Wickford. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at Digbeth Institute. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. First and third Thursdays in March (5th and 19th), Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., C. Phillips, 4 Lowell House, Sultan Terrace, S.E.5.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 55, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to P. T. Rurvell, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. **Fulham** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulheron, 366, Aikenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, March 9th and 23rd at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to M. Temple, 74 Gore Rd., Hackney, E.9.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to Secretary, 22, Sanderstead Avenue, N.W.2.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7.9 p.m. discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. D. Courtney, 53 Canonbury Park South, N.1.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 446, Staines Road, Twickenham. Branch meets Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at the above address. Tel. Feltham 4006.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets Tuesdays, 10th and 24th March, at 7.45 p.m., Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate. Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. I. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 584 Vol. 49 April, 1953

THE WAR OF THE PETROL PUMP

FACING FACTS IN FORMOSA

THE FRUITS OF FALSE THEORIES

ABOUT BOOKS

THE PASSING SHOW

BOYCOTT IN WEST AFRICA

RINGING THE CHANGES

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

D
4

From Lenin to Stalin

ALTHOUGH STALIN IS DEAD there still lingers about him a larger than life aspect. This is hardly surprising when we consider his antithetical role of an angel of light and prince of darkness. While such a black and white study might serve as a popular form of entertainment it reveals nothing about Stalin as a man and politician. For our part we are prepared to remain on ground level and try to evaluate Stalin by examining the social and economic soil from which he grew and if we may use the word—flourished.

One cannot, however, begin to understand Stalin without bringing in Lenin and the Bolsheviks who for many years formed a section of the Russian Social Democratic Party. Indeed that body of dogma, eclecticism, opportunism, and self contradictory ideas which goes under the name of Stalinism is in essence a more explicit form of what was always implicit in the theories and tactics of Lenin and his Bolshevik Party. While Stalin in his self-appointed role of Philosopher-Statesman sought to extend and amplify Leninism—the alleged Marxism of the 20th century—he never attempted to infringe his master's copyright on the subject.

Stalin himself was an old Bolshevik and not one of the least that Lenin led and inspired. He formed with Lenin a vital link in a chain of political ideas whose first phase culminated in the 1917 Russian Revolution. Certainly Stalin was more attuned to the intellectual and political atmosphere of the disciplined and conspiratorial Bolshevik Party than ever Trotsky was a fact no doubt of crucial value in his struggle for power with the latter. Leninism as a political creed was itself born out of the leadership notions and essentially undemocratic ideas of the early Bolsheviks. Stalinism was its inevitable and tragic fulfilment.

Yet when the Bolshevik Lenin first appeared on the Russian political scene he accepted the views of people like Plekhanov—whose acknowledged pupil he was—Axelrod, Deutsch and others. Lenin's first important work, "The Development of Capitalism in Russia," published 1899, put forward the view that Capitalism was developing in Russia and nothing could stop its continuance. This development he argued was historically progressive in relation to the then existing semi-feudal economy of Russia. While one could not oppose this development he said, nevertheless workers should organise to resist its evils and steps should be taken to prepare for its eventual suppression.

Lenin's book was part of an ideological campaign which the Russian

Social Democratic Party were waging against the Narodniki (Populists) who maintained that Russia had a social development which was peculiar to itself and therefore did not have to pass through a normal and full capitalist development which other countries had experienced. In fact they averred that Capitalism was a kind of Western disease against which the people of Russia could and should be inoculated. Let us, they said, get rid of the tyranny of Czarism and we can, on the basis of our rural collectivism (the Mir), establish Socialism, i.e. free peasant communes and cooperatives of workers.

"Socialism in one Country" has then a much longer history than the Stalinist formulation of it. It is an ironical footnote on the earlier activities of Lenin and Stalin that the very theory they sought to combat was the one which in the end they made their own.

In fact it was Lenin who after the meagre achievements of "War Communism" re-introduced the idea of a homegrown Russian Socialism when he announced his "New Economic Policy." It was the "Marxist" Lenin who proclaimed the myth that State Capitalism although a step backward from the earlier Bolshevik aims had in it, nevertheless, socialist implications. It was Lenin who repeatedly put forward the view that a Soviet State could be both the means and guarantee for realising Socialism in one country, and the further myth shared by both Stalin and Trotsky that what was taking place in Russia then was different from anywhere else in the world.

Lenin's own views on Marxism had through the years undergone considerable change from his earlier standpoint. How much so could be seen in the attitude he adopted in the closing years of the 1914-18 war. Lenin had come to believe more and more that Capitalism was doomed, that it would be unable to finish the war it had started. Peace was to come by a victorious proletarian revolution in the advanced capitalist countries. For that reason the traditional difference between bourgeois and proletarian revolutions had for him lost significance. Given the right leadership in Russia a socialist revolution not a bourgeois one would be the order of the day. At the first All Russian Congress of Soviets, of which his party was only a small minority, he declared their willingness to take over immediately. In the August of that year he flatly asserted that "majority rule was a constitutional illusion."

Lenin's predictions of what was going to happen to capitalism were falsified by the actual events. The capitalists did finish the war and no proletarian revolution took place. So Lenin's main justification for a socialist revolution went by the board.

It is true the Bolsheviks did come to power in Russia. But it was neither with the acclamation nor assent of the Russian people. It was in the quiet of the early hours of the morning of November 7th that Bolshevik military cars occupied the centres of business and communication in Petrograd. This sealed the fate of Kerensky's Provisional Government and assured the Bolsheviks of political power. Thus did the population of Petrograd discover when they woke a few hours later that their "Proletarian Dictatorship" was an accomplished fact.

That the Bolsheviks concluded peace with Ger-

many, dispossessed the private capitalist and against their own judgment gave the land to the peasants is a matter of history. They were successful because in war weary, exhausted Russia they conceded to the inevitable. Behind the facade of their concession they planned however a new discipline and developed the latent forces for a new social order—new to Russia—but in its exploitation based on wage labour, as old as capitalism itself.

Nor was the undemocratic seizure of power by the Bolsheviks merely the fortuitous result of filling the vacuum caused by the indecision and incompetence of Kerensky's Government. Such action by the Bolsheviks was in keeping with their political ideas which the circumstances arising from the collapse of Czarist Russia enabled them to exploit.

The Bolsheviks, mainly recruited from the Russian bourgeois intelligentsia, had long regarded themselves as the born leaders of the Russian people, an illusion they shared with the Fabians and other reformist parties. By identifying themselves with the aims and aspirations of the non-socialist mass and securing their confidence the Bolsheviks believed that, with such backing, they could ride to political power at an opportune moment.

Because they believed themselves to be the commanding officers of the politically less conscious majority it is easy to see why the spreading of socialist ideas was subordinated to the preoccupation of tactics, unity of command and the strict discipline of party organisation. Within such a party it was obvious that freedom of individual action and opinion were gravely limited. Ideas for them were not something to be accepted because of their integral and logical structure but as an ideal means for successfully waging political struggles. Theory for the Bolsheviks, as it became later for the various Communist Parties, meant a creed, a dogma to be inflexibly held against all comers.

That the Bolsheviks adopted Marxism not only saved them the trouble of formulating theories of their own but as a well established doctrine, it provided an admirable ideological basis to which changes and shifts in policy could be ultimately referred and by which they could be justified. This is the true significance of Lenin's oft repeated phrase, echoed and re-echoed by Stalin, "Theory is a guide to practice." For the Bolsheviks these dogmas set the limit to and decided the nature of freedom of discussion. Whatever differences may exist between Roman Catholicism and "Communism" there is at least this much in common.

It is from the mental and political outlook of the Bolsheviks we can trace the evolution of that pernicious scholasticism by which Stalin and his party not only conducted their purges but sought to hide from the world and perhaps themselves what was really taking place in "Socialist Russia."

It would also account for the reason why men like Lenin and Stalin were at one and the same time, rigid doctrinaires and flexible, opportunistic politicians. Perhaps for dictators there is an emotional need for dogma. Many tyrants have justified their evil work on the assumption that it was ultimately for the good of mankind. Even Stalin explaining that Soviet Russia is not exempt from economic laws indulged in turgid Marxist phraseology and quotes from Engels who it appears plays a similar role in Soviet theology to that once played by Aristotle in the Catholic Church.

In such an organisation as the Bolsheviks it is not surprising that the dictum, the end justifies the means, was raised to a ruling principle. Long before the revolution they held that any means were permissible against logical step to ensure that all means were justifiable.

The Bolsheviks themselves however became the victims of their own anti-democratic pressures. From "all power to the Soviets" it passed to "all power to the Communist Party." The checks and balances of ordinary democratic procedure were absent. The struggle of rival groups had to be carried on within the Communist Party. Intrigue and plotting under ideological disguises became the effective means for realising political ambitions. Because of years of unbridled power the Communist Party was mentally and politically incapable of resolving the struggle by democratic means. Maintenance of power at any price became for them a matter of life and death. On a chequer board of political tactics the old Bolshevik "moved, mated and slayed" until the assumption of power rested in one man—Stalin; which compelled the fashioning of a mighty repressive machine to ensure his own preservation and that of the

ruling faction which he represented.

While Stalin was prepared to make concessions to the Russian people and even grant a "New Constitution" he was incapable of granting them political freedom. Whatever may have been Stalin's claims for what he achieved in Russia he was never prepared to submit them to normal political competition. For Stalin that would have been the end of Stalinism.

It was Stalin who completed the work begun by Lenin, the turning of Marxism, a revolutionary doctrine into its opposite an authoritative ideology of State Capitalism on a par and at times competing with other state ideologies, i.e. Hitler's National Socialism and Mussolini's Corporate State.

The Bolsheviks in spite of their Marxist language and at times idealistic phrases were never socialists. They served instead as spokesmen of a new ruling class in Russia, a class itself the outcome of the very economic tendencies existing in Russia, the tendencies towards State Capitalism. In the furnace of the Russian Revolution the Bolsheviks were themselves forged into an instrument of class domination. In that sense was Joseph Djugashvili a man of steel.

E.W.

THE FRUITS OF FALSE THEORIES

The Origins of Stalinism

IN the eulogies of Stalin, as with those following the death of Lenin, the movement to which both their names are given—Stalinism and Leninism—is represented as an innovation; as an essential departure from the ideas and policies of the social democratic movement, though at the same time it was claimed to be in line with the views put forward by Marx. In fact, however, though both of them broke away from the 2nd International (which had already fallen to pieces), they carried out policies that were implicit in the aims and the practice of the 2nd International. The face of Russia today is the logical working out of these aims and policies. The disputes between the Social Democrats and the Bolsheviks, in spite of the vituperation and clouds of words, was not over aims and policies but over the methods of pushing forward the policies and accomplishing the aims. It was the utter ruthlessness of the Bolsheviks that frightened them.

Both Lenin and Stalin poured loads of scorn and denunciations upon the old Social Democratic Parties and their leaders, as well as upon the syndicalist section of the International, but Bolshevik policy embraced the outlook of them all. Lenin and his associates claimed that the Social Democratic leaders were renegades when, in fact, all that the Bolsheviks could have argued against these leaders was that they were more cautious in pressing forward similar aims. Lenin was a fraternal delegate to 2nd International Congresses and only fell out with these leaders in 1914 on a particular interpretation of the war as the propitious moment to aim at the conquest of power. Although the Social Democrats made much of the minority aspect of the Bolshevik capture of power it was also accepted in their own practical actions in spite of theoretical statements to the contrary.

What has led many people to see a fundamental difference between, for instance, the Social Democrat,

the Bolshevik and the Syndicalist in the ranks of the 2nd International is simply that the International contained what is called a left, a centre and a right wing—a group that carried 2nd International ideas to their logical conclusion in practice, a group that vacillated and a group that shut their eyes to the logical outcome of the ideas they advocated.

The Future as seen by Social Democrats

To what, briefly, were the leaders of the 2nd International looking forward? A transition period in which Capitalism would merge into Socialism. And how did they define this transition period? Let us see what they had to say about it. Owing to the limitations of space we can only quote from three sources, but they were leading representatives of the 2nd International on the theoretical side—German, Belgian and American.

First let us see what Karl Kautzky said about the society that would follow capitalism. The quotations are from "The Class Struggle," a book published in English by Kerr & Co. of Chicago in the early years of the present century.

"The distribution of goods in a socialist society might possibly continue for some time under forms that are essentially developments of the existing system of wage payments." (page 141)

"All forms of modern wage-payment—fixed salaries, piece wages, time wages, bonuses—all of them are reconcilable with the spirit of a socialist society; and there is not one of them that may not play a role in socialist society, as the wants and customs of its members, together with the requirements of production, may demand." (page 143)

Russia has carried these ideas out.

In 1907 Emile Vandervelde, another leading member of the 2nd International, wrote a book entitled "Collectivism and Industrial Revolution." In this book he went into considerable detail about the future, and

we are quoting from it at some length because the extracts give a fair idea of what the prominent theoreticians of the 2nd International were anticipating as the face of the future.

"Consequently, under a régime of pure collectivism—to suppose what we do not assume beforehand, that this régime is to be realised some day—the land, mines, manufacturing establishments, the instruments of credit, the means of communication and transport will belong to the community: only articles of consumption would remain personal property.

"The management of affairs, instead of being as today monarchical or oligarchical, would take the republican form; instead of being given over by right of birth or by right of conquest, to capitalists competing or combined it would belong not to the State, as it is said and repeated in order to mislead, but to autonomous public corporations under the control of the State." (Introduction pages xiii-xiv)

"By the very fact of its magnitude, this revolution can only be the result of a long and complex series of partial variations. 'Radical changes cannot be sudden: sudden changes cannot be radical.'" (page xv)

"In fact there is nothing to prevent us imagining a socialist state, in which individual ownership and labour would co-exist with collective ownership and labour." (page 47)

After distinguishing between the authoritative and economic functions of the State—the former gradually decreasing and the latter gradually increasing—he projects across the future the "Governmental State" and the "Administrative State" based upon voluntary co-operation and then says of the "Administrative State":

"States when thus transformed, regulating in different hierarchical ranks the movements of commerce and finance, presiding over the external industrial relations of the different centres of population, are nothing else than Agencies appointed by more or less numerous associations, and invested with the confidence of those who have chosen them." (pages 160-161)

"Likewise, in a Socialist state, it is after having satisfied all needs which are of general concern, after having secured for all members of the community the right to existence, that the excess of products, or rather of values produced, should form the object of differential distribution.

"In the proportion in which it would be socially useful from the point of view of production to allow special advantages to certain workers or to certain categories of workers, in order to stimulate their energies and their power of labour, nothing would prevent a collectivist society from maintaining—mutatis mutandis—the graduated scale of salaries which exists today in the public services.

"Collectivism does not, then, necessarily imply equality of remuneration." (pages 177-178)

It will be noticed that at one time Vandervelde uses the State to mean governmental machinery and at another a particular society but, even so, for him the State is still something apart from the mass of people, the controlling and deciding body.

The Practical Result of the Vision

What is the essence of all these quotations but, near enough, what at present obtains in Russia? True, freedom to think does not exist there; the dictatorship is ruthless and bureaucratic—but this was the logical outcome of Social Democratic theory. They held up their hands in horror at the speeding up process which involved the sacrifice of millions of lives, but they accepted, as part of their own idea of protracted development in which millions of lives were also sacrificed in "Offensive" and "Defensive" wars, in which was also implicit the "socialism in one country" idea—the "armed militia," the "armed people" and the "citizen army."

So close was the fundamental identity between the

policy of the 2nd International and the policy of the Bolsheviks that leaders of the 2nd International were at pains to try and find some distinguishing characteristic that would enable them to dissociate themselves from the ruthlessness and rebut the criticisms of Lenin. They all had to agree that the Bolsheviks were socialists but—they were doing some things they "didn't order do"—they were forcing the pace too much. Not that this would fail to achieve the object, but that it would shake their hold on power.

After the Bolshevik Capture of Power

The third member of the 2nd International whom we will quote, is Morris Hillquit, once a prominent theoretician of the Socialist Party of America. He summed up the position in 1921 in his book "From Marx to Lenin." Here are some extracts from it:

"And it is idle cavilling to dispute the Socialist character of the Russian Revolution. A socialist revolution does not mean the immediate establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth. It is only the political act of seizing the power of government on behalf of the workers and with the object of using it for the abolition of private ownership in the means of production and for the development of collective work and enjoyment.

"The Russian revolution has taken possession of the government in the name of the workers. It has effectively expropriated private capitalist owners and has nationalised the greater part of the industries. It has also written into its program the socialisation of the land. Measured by all practical tests it is therefore a Socialist revolution in character as well as intent." (page 33)

"What is the historic form of a Socialist government?"

"Every attempted answer to the question must take into account the fact that political institutions are not viewed by Marxist students as static forms, nor as definitely demarcated historical periods. The Socialist political revolution marks the conscious beginning of the process of transformation into Socialism, but only its beginning.

"The revolution, which is the working-class conquest of the political power, leaves the capitalists for the time being in possession of the economic power. On the day of the revolution the capitalist class still owns the essential means and instruments of wealth production and distribution. It manages the financial, industrial and commercial institutions of the country and controls the whole intricate and delicately interwoven economic life of the people. The transfer of all industries from private capitalist ownership into communal property and public management; in short, the break-up of capitalism and the building up of a pure Socialist order, calls for a series of planful and fundamental industrial and political changes. Such changes will, of course, not be undertaken by the capitalist class. They can only be brought about by the workers. In order to accomplish them the workers must be in control of the governmental machinery and their control must continue until the task of Socialisation of the industries has been fully performed, all economic class divisions have been abolished, the working class itself has ceased to exist as a class, and the working class government has given way to the classless administration of the Socialist régime. The consecutive stages of development roughly succeeding each other may be regarded from different points of view and characterised according to the angle from which they are viewed." (pages 49-50)

Here again we see clearly expressed the harmony between the outlook of the 2nd International and the practice of the Bolsheviks in spite of the hot air that developed between them over the years. Hillquit identifies the conquest of power by the Bolsheviks as the conquest of power by the workers. Thus, by implication, he illustrates the accepted idea of leadership which was ingrained in the 2nd International, in spite of protestations about capture of power by the workers. Lenin,

at a time when he was writing eulogies on Kautsky and the German Social Democratic Party, was also contending that the workers were incapable of developing social democratic ideas from within their own ranks; these, he said, they could only get from outside, from the "bourgeois intellectuals." Stalin has only carried on this contempt for the mass of people along with the expansion of the bureaucratic machinery so dear to the social democrats.

Syndicalists and Bolsheviks

Now let us compare the ideas of the advocates of Syndicalism in the International with those of the Bolsheviks. Syndicalists argued that Syndicalism was based on the principles of Marx; they were opposed to democracy as a capitalist form; they contended that the mass of workers were ignorant and inert, requiring an intelligent and militant minority to lead and force them into the promised land; they claimed that Syndicalism was the form at last discovered under which the workers could work out their emancipation; they propagated the idea of violence against both workers and capitalists; they claimed that the days of theory had passed and the days for action had come; they also put forward a number of other ideas which, as well as those mentioned, became a part of Bolshevik propaganda and demonstrate a certain similarity of outlook between Syndicalism and Bolshevism, indicating the common source of both movements. Even the much vaunted Soviet organisation was a reflection of Syndicalist ideas eventually set out in detail as a social organisation by the Industrial Workers of the World in 1905, a group that included a confused mixture of political and industrial action as a means to accomplish the end they had in view.

Syndicalism set out to secure the victory of a militant minority by the use of violence just as the Bolsheviks did. The claim that they were acting in the interest of all reminds one of the anarchist in Richard Whiting's novel "No. 5 John Street" who defined anarchism as a system of society in which everyone shall do as he likes, and those that don't shall be made!

Beginning and End of the Dream

Lenin constantly referred back to the French Revolution and the attitude of the Jacobins for inspiration. The practical policy that grew out of the French Revolution and continued like a red thread through the working class movement afterwards, openly adopted successively by Blanqui, Bakounine, De Leon and Lenin was based upon the idea that an active minority can carry with it an inert and ignorant mass; it is a policy that depends upon leadership and ultimately places power in the hands of one or two outstanding people, finally degenerating into personal quarrels between these leaders as Bolshevism has amply demonstrated. The 2nd International was soaked in this despite the protestations and lip service to the control by the masses by some of its outstanding spokesmen. What Lenin and Stalin did was to stress whatever part of the 2nd International hotch potch best suited their purpose to get and keep control in Russia; thus they vacillated from one aspect to another and then back again, but always moving towards, and eventually achieving, that alleged transition form envisaged by the spokesmen of the 2nd International. Time has had its joke. The "transition form" has emerged as simply a particular form of unbridled Capitalism.

It should be clear from the quotations we have given that the Russian dictatorship, far from representing a fresh and fundamental departure from the ideas accepted by the 2nd International, has only been the logical working in out in practice of those ideas, though at a more rapid pace than was originally anticipated. The end of the process has been—just a particular form of Capitalism. No wonder Wilhelm Liebknecht was apprehensive and took time off from a holiday to write "No Compromise" in 1899, which contained the following pregnant words:

"We cannot traffic in our principles, we can make no compromise, no agreement with the ruling system. We must break with the ruling system and fight it to a finish." (page 55)

GILMAC.

ABOUT BOOKS

A MAN who was born and reared amongst a primitive people, who speaks their language fluently, who has been accepted and initiated into a high and respected rank in their community and who is a student of anthropology, such a man is in a remarkably good position to write of their history and social organisation. Mr. L. S. B. Leakey has all these qualifications to write of the Kikuyu people of Kenya and the Mau Mau organisation that has developed amongst them.

Mr. Leakey spent a number of years, working with Kikuyu elders, compiling a very lengthy and detailed book on these people, but the book has not yet found a publisher. Last year Mr. Leakey wrote a shorter book, now published by Methuen and Co. under the title "Mau Mau and the Kikuyu," for 7/6d.

Since September, 1952, when the Kenya Government declared a state of emergency, the press in this country has told us of the murders and terrorist tactics perpetrated by Mau Mau without giving us much of an inkling why an erstwhile peaceable people have sud-

denly resorted to these measures, and for what object.

Mr. Leakey does not seek to explain the trouble in Kenya merely by reference to the present set-up. He takes us back to the misty origins of the Kikuyu tribe and traces their history briefly from those times to the present day. He leans very much to the idea of "the white man's burden" and tries to whitewash the activities of the white colonists and their governments, a task which he obviously finds difficult.

Before their contact with white men the Kikuyu were an agricultural people living in the highlands of Kenya with a favourable climate and a fertile soil.

"... by the closing decades of the nineteenth century the early travellers and explorers of Kenya, describing Kikuyu land as they saw it, used such terms as 'as far as the eye could see it was one vast garden.'" (page 7)

Their social organisation was simple but highly effective. Land was held by families and sub-clans, the sub-clan being a sort of extended family. They had no chiefs; the head of the family was the senior man and the head of the sub-clan was an elected man chosen for

his wisdom. But these heads had no arbitrary powers and any trading in land could only be done through consultation with the elders. Tenants on a piece of land did not claim property rights but only the right to cultivate it, and could be called upon to give it up subject to certain compensations.

The social administration was on a tribal basis and tribal councils were democratic. The marriage customs, education, religion and the system of magic were complicated but fitted in with the social conditions prevailing. Theft and immorality were practically unknown. The fear of social ostracism was sufficient to deter any possible wrongdoer. The religion, like all religions, was steeped in superstition but was peculiarly adapted to the conditions under which the Kikuyu lived.

Then came the white man at a time immediately following a tragic period in the history of these people, when they had been decimated by plague, famine and epidemics. The rest of the story is the age old one of the breaking down of primitive social organisation, the expropriation of the land and the creation of an army of wage workers with all the evils that capitalism brings in its train. The missionaries attacked the tribal religion and broke down the system of native education in favour of Christianity and capitalist ethics. The capitalist government took over the functions of the tribal councils. Many of the Kikuyu were rendered landless and reduced to abject poverty with none of their old security of livelihood.

Mr. Leakey tells us in simple words of the results:

"At the same time the temptation to steal has increased a thousandfold. The needs of young men and women in the olden days were small, and they were met without difficulty by their own families. Young men, seeking to enhance their reputation with the girls, did so by deeds of bravery, by excelling at dancing, by being such good organisers or speech-makers that they were chosen by their fellows as leaders. Today, a young man, after initiation, feels that in order to make an impression with the girls, he must dress well in European clothes, must have a bicycle with a pillion to take his girl friends for rides, and so on. As he often cannot earn enough to fulfil this need for exhibitionism of the average courting male, the temptation to steal becomes

measurably greater." (page 79)

Unemployment and hunger also drive these people to steal, and the breakdown of the tribal moral code removes the fear of social ostracism for theft. As the author tells us, under the old tribal conditions, thieving "just wasn't done." Now it is.

"Under present day conditions, too, it often happens that the difficulties which face a young married couple are much more serious than in the olden days, and the circumstances are far less conducive to a happy marriage, so that many of these marriages break up. The woman is far from her people, and if she leaves her husband she often does not return to her home, but may join the ever increasing number of prostitutes in the towns or else make a semi-permanent liaison with some man to whom she is not married, either by native law and custom, or by Christian ceremony, or by ordinary civil marriage." (page 75)

So with drunkenness, bribery, corruption and the rest. A few Kikuyu have become very wealthy, the majority have sunk to poverty that they never knew before.

Out of all this grew the Kikuyu political organisations; the Kikuyu Central Association, the Kenya African Union and finally Mau Mau. They threw up such men as Harry Thuku, Peter Koinage and Jomo Kenyatta. The suppression of the K.C.A. drove its members underground and gave rise to the present terrorist movement.

This is a useful, topical and easily read little book. The reader will find in it, not only the story of the Kikuyu but also the story of all primitive peoples when capital permeates their society. Despite the author's reformist conclusions and his feeble apologies for the actions of capitalist governments, we can unhesitatingly recommend this book.

"The Naked and the Dead," by Norman Mailer was reviewed in *The Socialist Standard* in the July, 1950 issue. It is a very gruesome and ugly war book of World War II with the scene laid in a tropical jungle island. We have nothing to add to the previous review. But it may interest readers to know that a cheap edition (by Allan Wingate, 8/6d.) is now available. Of its kind it is good.

W. WATERS.

FACING FACTS IN FORMOSA

A NEW war scare is going the rounds. General Eisenhower, in his State of the Union announcement, says that the American fleet would no longer be used to prevent raids by the Nationalist Chinese against the Chinese mainland. Such a decision would be in the fashion these days—of a big power using a small one as a cat's paw. This contemplated extension of the war in Korea to the great Asian mainland, has aroused the fear that this may be a step towards World War III.

Formosa was part of the Chinese Empire for 400 years from the time of Kublai Khan until European traders arrived on the scene, since when it has been a bone of contention. The Dutch who occupied the tip in 1624 were ousted by the Spaniards. The Dutch retook the island after defeating the Spaniards. A Chinese force from the mainland defeated the Dutch and took possession in 1662. Then came the Japanese in 1895 who took six years to subdue the islanders. After the conclusion of World War II, the Chinese Nationalists then in power in China, took possession in 1945. The Communists on the island revolted in 1947 but the

attempt was put down with great severity.

Immediately after the defeat of Japan, the U.S.A. backed Chiang Kai-Shek in the civil war against the Communists. American post-war financial backing from 1945 until 1949 amounts to U.S. \$3,875 million. ("China Stands Up" by R. K. Karanji). This turned out to be a bad investment for the American Capitalist class because the Nationalist military machine lost the war, and took refuge in the Island of Formosa where they have since remained as a quiescent government, lavishly supported by the U.S.

The British Government considers that support to Chiang Kai-Shek is throwing good money after bad, and with their long and intimate experience in China were amused at the American policy of pouring money into Chiang Kai-Shek's coffers. Much of this money is lost in graft and most of the arms have found their way into the hands of the opposing Communist side.

American Strategy

Formosa is an island cross-roads, halfway between Shanghai and Hongkong, and halfway between Tokyo

and Saigon, so that control of the island by the Chinese Nationalists means that they (on behalf of their mentors) appear to control these routes. Another aspect of the island's strategic position is that along with Japan and the Philippines it acts as a bastion of American defence, or as a spring-board in case of invasion to the Asian mainland.

Another use of Formosa to the U.S.A. is that so long as control is invested in the Chiang Kai-Shek clique, there is always the inherent danger of invasion of the mainland, and this risk keeps large bodies of Chinese troops tied down—soldiers who would otherwise be available for service against the Allies in Korea.

But viewed from Peking, the American threat may take on a different aspect—it may appear as a sign of weakness. The Chinese may think that after two and a half years of fighting, the armies of the West can no longer see hope of victory arising from action on the battlefield, and are therefore casting about for some other means.

The Clash Between British and American Interests

Britain and the U.S.A. in the Far East have been traditionally hostile to one another—the friction arising over sharing the spoils from the China trade. Britain, the first on the scene, got the lion's share—an untenable state of affairs for American interests.

The temptation to grasp this juicy plum has tantalised the U.S. even more since the atrophy of British power and the rise of American power in the "free" world.

The lusty adolescent U.S. capitalist power is swash-buckling with a full purse in the Far East, with the cynical, older and more experienced Chinese and British rulers watching for the main chance.

A blockade would destroy the prosperity of the British Crown Colony of Hongkong—before the Korean War, China consistently accounted for over one-third of Hongkong's total trade, and moreover, British ships are the leading cargo-carriers on the Hongkong/Shanghai route. Furthermore, the British presumably still remember the consequences of their aggressive action against China in the 1st Opium War of 1839/1844, which resulted in driving China into closer diplomatic and economic relations with Russia.

If China were Blockaded

A study of the situation would not be complete without estimating the probable effects of blockading the China coast. On the credit side for American capitalism firstly, the previously stated tying-down of Chinese forces to counteract the possibility of Nationalist landings on the mainland. Secondly, to the extent that a blockade was effective, it would mean that fewer supplies, directly or indirectly useful in prosecuting the war in Korea, would be received by China—the real enemy of America on the Korean peninsula. Thirdly, the loss of trade that would undoubtedly result from a blockade might increase to danger-point the opposition to the present Chinese government, and thus induce them to sue for peace terms in Korea to the advantage of American imperialism.

Against the above factors, we must remember that the risk of offensive action by Chiang Kai-Shek on the mainland, has in fact already tied down a million Chinese troops, and that possibly the Chinese Government would not need to increase this number.

As to the cutting down of supplies—the Chinese Government has, since its inception in 1949, pursued a policy of economic self-sufficiency, coupled with development of trade with Russia and with other East European countries. Thus the Chinese, never a seafaring race, have of recent years become even less dependent on sea routes. *The Financial Times* (11-2-53) states that:—

"In 1950 Chinese trade with other Communist countries accounted for 26 per cent. of her total trade. By 1951, according to Chinese sources, the percentage had risen to 61 per cent, and in 1952 the figure is expected to be over 70 per cent.

Trade between China and the United States has almost ceased. There have been no shipments of U.S. goods to China since 1950 and licences for U.S. imports from China are now restricted to cases where the refusal to grant a licence would cause severe distress to U.S. importers.

The general conclusion which emerges is that China has little to offer of which the world cannot secure adequate supplies elsewhere, with the possible exception of bristle and tung oil, and that China needs little, except rubber, which she cannot buy from behind the Iron Curtain."

Against the third point—of exciting internal opposition, it may be doubted whether there is any possibility of effective opposition from the capitalists in China.

For the purposes of this review, we are assuming that a blockade by Chinese Nationalist forces, even with the assistance of the U.S. 7th Fleet, will be efficient, but this is most unlikely. The corruption, and consequent ineffectiveness, of the Chiang Kai-Shek clique has been a major scandal even in the Orient (where venality is taken almost for granted). Moreover, smuggling is big business in China and has been practised successfully for years in opposition to an efficient administration. It would be surprising indeed if a blockade from Formosa brought sea-going traffic to a standstill.

In considering the possibility of a successful invasion of the mainland, it may be useful to recall the behaviour of Nationalist troops in contact with the Red Army during the civil war which ended in 1949; these peasant troops, favouring the Communists Party's Land Reform programme, had no stomach for fighting and were glad to surrender and get the opportunity of returning to their homes. There seems to be no reason why this could not happen again.

Is Eisenhower Bluffing?

We must not forget that Eisenhower has only just been elected President of the U.S.A., and his sponsors, the Republican Party, in their first success in this direction for many years, are much concerned in maintaining the interest of the electors. General Eisenhower, as a soldier, is expected to talk tough, and anyway, tough talk costs nothing.

But whatever the next move by the ruling class in the dangerous game of power politics, in the final analysis it is the workers who make the armaments and fight the wars for the protection of their masters' interests and their acquiescence is necessary for the carrying out of policies. At the present time, for instance, the workers may be sufficiently fed-up with war and war conditions to make themselves heard in opposition to a government extending a local war into a world war.

F. OFFORD.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

APRIL,



1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3814. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THE WAR OF THE PETROL PUMP

WHILE governments and the big oil combines jostle for control of the oil resources of the world a second front has been opened up on the British home market. With the ending of war-time controls the companies were allowed on 1st February of this year to resume the pre-war practice of selling their own branded high grade motor spirit alongside the continued sale of the lower-grade and cheaper "pool" petrol.

They had been preparing for this revival of competition for many months, partly by extensive advertising and partly by getting garage owners to enter agreements binding them to sell only certain brands.

Before the war the petrol companies spent about £600,000 a year on newspaper advertising. In 1951 the amount was £641,500 but in 1952 it rose to nearly £1,000,000 (*Manchester Guardian* 31 January, 1953).

On the control of garages the Financial Editor of the *Manchester Guardian* writes:—

"For at least two years the petrol companies have been making their preparations. More and more garages have made exclusive arrangements with one or other of the main petrol companies. Garages have been rebuilt and repainted, in return for which they have agreed to sell one company's petrol only. Nearly three-quarters of the country's pumps are now said to be tied in this way."

The motoring correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* (11/3/53) puts the proportion of "tied" garages as high as 90 per cent.

In some cases the "tied" garage undertakes to sell only one company's petrol, but as Shell and Anglo-Iranian have a joint selling arrangement (Shell-Mex and B.P.) their agreements tie the garage to supplies from Shell or Anglo-Iranian refineries (*Economist*, January, 1953).

One by-product of the struggle is that in order to protect their "tied" garages, some of the companies are reported to be refusing supplies of petrol to independent garages in the same district.

In addition to advertising, the companies are also

wooing trade with "gifts." Miss Burton, M.P., informed the Minister of Fuel and Power on 9 February that Shell are giving away a brush and duster "with a retail value of at least 5/-"; countered by the Regent Company's presentation of jigsaw puzzles and propelling pencils.

The war also extends to lubricating oils and the Vigzol Company which specialises in supplying farms complained that "some national oil companies... are offering ludicrous enticements to break up strong links we have developed with dealers for 30 years." The head of the firm states that the petrol companies are giving agricultural engineers commissions of up to £5 a barrel on lubricating oil to get business (*Daily Express*, 22/11/52).

A writer in the *Sunday Dispatch* (18/1/53) says that altogether the battle for the petrol market has cost the companies several million pounds already.

Although the companies are competing for the general market they are still (or were until last year) submitting identical tenders for sales to the government.

The four largest competitors (in addition to some smaller ones) are Shell, Anglo-Iranian, Esso and Regent. Anglo-Iranian has government nominees on its board and the government owns a large shareholding. Shell is linked with Royal Dutch and they, like Anglo-Iranian, control oil concerns in many parts of the world. Among the Royal Dutch-Shell subsidiaries is a large concern operating in the U.S.A.

Esso is a subsidiary of the American Standard Oil but sells motor spirit refined in this country. Regent sells imported petrol from refineries abroad operated by Trinidad leaseholds. The National Benzole Co.'s products are a mixture of petrol with benzole, the latter derived from coal.

The general background of the petrol war is of course the enormous development since the end of the war of the oilfields, refineries and oil tanker fleets, so that although world consumption has increased fast there have been several scares in the past seven years that production would overstep demand. It has been noted with concern that America, which produces and consumes much more than the rest of the world together, increased its consumption in 1952 by only 3%, compared with 10% the year before, and in the meantime more and more refining capacity is coming into production.

In Britain oil refining capacity in 1945 was only 2,500,000 tons of crude oil a year. It is now over 20 million tons and when work is completed on refineries now building it will be over 30 million tons. ("The World Oil Industry," *Financial Times* Supplement, 2 February, 1953).

What this development will involve can be seen from the fact that in 1945 three-quarters of Britain's refined oil was imported. Now it is an export, and the Minister of Fuel states that in 1953 it is expected to exceed in value the export of coal. When the full refinery programme is completed there will be an urgent need to find world markets for the great quantity being produced.

The particular background of the "branded petrol" war is the "catalytic cracking" plants which produce the high-grade motor spirit. The six plants built or building will have cost £20,000,000 by the time they are all in operation. But here, according to the *Financial Times* (31 January, 1953) the real problem arises. By

mid-1953 their output capacity will be about 5½ million tons, but even the present output of 3½ million tons "should be ample" for the existing demand for high-grade petrols.

"Thus, assuming that the refineries settle down to a rate of operation of about 75 per cent. to 80 per cent. of capacity, the potential volume of supplies of British refined premier grades is more than adequate."

The problem then is for the companies to expand the sales of the high-grades by persuading the commercial users of motor transport that they, as well as the private motorist, should use the higher-priced, "premier" grades.

"Indeed it seems that unless the demand for premier grades expands considerably compared with pre-war the oil industry will find it hard to justify the whole of its investment of £20 million in the post-war catalytic crackers."

THE PASSING SHOW

Ready-made argument

It has been remarked before that nationalisation does nothing to change the class position of the workers in society, gives the workers no control over or interest in their industry, and leaves unchanged the basic condition of capitalist society—the divorce of the workers from the ownership of the means of production. Not only this; nationalisation provides a ready-made argument for the capitalists and their newspapers, a potent weapon in the continuous propaganda fight against the interests of the workers. It can now be claimed that since the workers "wanted nationalisation," they should tamely accept their conditions, abandon their most powerful means of defence in the industrial field, the strike, and submit without demur to the dictates of the new State-appointed bosses.

Loss to the Commercial Community

This argument is used despite the fact that there is less and less concealment of the part nationalised industries are playing. Their first duty is that placed upon them in the Acts of Parliament setting them up—to make a profit, and pay interest to the "ex"-shareholders. Their second is to provide an efficient service for the other industries, still under the control of private capitalists, which depend upon them. For example, nationalised transport. In the debate in the Lords on February 23rd on the Government's proposals to denationalise road transport, speakers on both sides took as their criterion whether or not these proposals would benefit the capitalists who used the road transport services. For the Opposition, Lord Lucas said:

"If the Government proceeded with the proposals outlined in the Bill for selling the assets by public auction without a reserve the loss to the taxpayers would be at least £50m., and the loss to industry and to the commercial community would be absolutely immeasurable."

On the Conservative side, Lord Gifford said that the "denationalisation of road transport would be justified if it gave the trader a better service."

Laying it on

What is one to say of those Labour leaders who, in face of the clear evidence to the contrary, still maintain that nationalisation is Socialism? But some Labour

The *Financial Times* concludes that the companies will "only obtain the full return on the large amount of capital invested in the catalytic crackers" if they succeed in getting the commercial motor users to change over to the costlier petrols.

What adds fierceness to the conflict is that American controlled Esso, with its giant refinery at Fawley (the largest in Britain), is challenging the other large companies. Before the war Esso had only a small share of the British market and is fighting to enlarge it in order to find a market for the output of Fawley. The Cleveland Petroleum Co. also sells petrol bought from Fawley.

The outcome of the battle cannot yet be known. When it is there will be rich prizes for the victors and falling profits for the losers—and nothing for the working class either way.

leaders go further. Not content with having given, by their measures of nationalisation, an excellent argument against the workers in the nationalised industries to the newspapers which openly support the capitalists, they now turn round on the workers and use that very same argument themselves. One of these is Ness Edwards. Having taken a leading share in forging this stick to beat the workers, he now takes a turn in laying it on.

The Folly of Ness Edwards

Mr. Edwards took it on himself to write an article in the *Daily Herald* on February 19th which he called "The Folly of the Few"; but he only succeeded in revealing his own foolishness. There is so much nonsense packed into this short article that we shall have to confine ourselves to a few of his more erratic statements.

"We nationalised the mines, the railways, and other industries, not only to get more efficiency and remove class injustice—but also to give men and women the chance to live fuller lives."

Since Mr. Edwards gives the "living of fuller lives" and "the removal of class injustice" merely as the purposes, not the results, of nationalisation, we can say little more. Certainly it would be wildly inaccurate to allege that nationalisation, for instance of the coal mines, had given the chance of a fuller life to anyone except those like Lord Hyndley, who was able to widen his field of activities from running the Powell Duffryn collieries in South Wales to lordling it over the entire British coal industry.

"We who believe in Socialism want to make more socialists. But our efforts are hampered by a small minority who have benefited by the first Socialist efforts and behave with an arrogant indifference to the well-being of the many."

Your support of nationalisation, Mr. Edwards, makes nonsense of your claim to believe in Socialism. The first is merely another term for state-capitalism, and no one can support both capitalism and Socialism. But substituting "labourite" for "Socialist," the rest of this quotation looks promising. For there is certainly a "small minority" which fits this description—the shareholders. Have they benefited from nationalisation? They have, and for these reasons. The coal industry at the end of the war was operating with equipment which was out of date years before. A vast programme

of capital re-equipment, which would involve the ploughing back of profit for years ahead, was necessary if the industry was ever to become profitable again. From this grim prospect the shareholders were saved, in the nick of time, by the timely action of the labour Government in nationalising the industry. From the day the State took over the coal mines, come rain or shine, boom or slump, strike or lock-out, the shareholders could count on their £14 million of interest each year as confidently as they could upon the sun each morning. So we know whom Mr. Edwards is referring to here.

Counter-revolutionary!

Or do we? Reading on, we find Mr. Edwards actually had in mind "unofficial strikers," those workers who still have the nerve to try and improve their conditions of work by using the strike weapon. But these workers, after all, are only withholding their labour-power—and property in this is the only property which capitalist society leaves them. Are wage-slaves in the state-capitalist industries to be so brow-beaten that they are to be denied even their last right of refusing for a week or two to apply their labour-power to their masters' instruments of production? It seems that if Mr. Edwards had his way, the answer would be Yes. He says: "These unofficial minority activities are reactionary and counter-revolutionary." Counter-revolutionary! Mr. Edwards is obviously supposing that a revolution has taken place. If it has, it must be the first revolution in history which is not visible to the naked eye.

Let us leave Mr. Edwards and his article there, as a warning of the ridiculous extremes to which the nationalisation fallacy can lead reformers.

Honesty and realism

Another labour leader who is worried that the workers may be expecting too much from the next Labour Government (though the experience of the last one should have ended permanently all such extravagant hope) is Mr. Gaitskell. Writing about the next election (*Reynolds News*, 15-2-53) he heads his remarks "Honesty and realism should be the keynote." We can grant Mr. Gaitskell that honesty at election times would come as a welcome change. But his other requirement, realism, sounds ominous; for this is a word much in use among politicians when they wish to prepare their audiences for further sacrifices and belt-tightening. And we are not disappointed. Mr. Gaitskell outlines his plans for "more production" and then says "But it does take time and it probably means that to start with there will be less rather than more to consume." Apart from the phrase "to start with," we couldn't agree more. Feeling that his programme so far will do little to attract voters, Mr. Gaitskell says that the Labour Party "must make a further attack on inequality in education and the concentration of property in too few hands." A further attack! We are still waiting for the first attack on "the concentration of property in too few hands"; undoubtedly it didn't take place, although it was promised, in the Labour Government's last term in office. How Mr. Gaitskell reconciles his implication that it did take place with the heading of his article, we leave to him.

On behalf of . . .

Mr. Tom O'Brien, the President of the General Council of the T.U.C., got into trouble the other day for sending a telegram to Mr. Churchill on the eve of his visit to the United States. The message began "You carry with you the good will of the workers of Britain and the Commonwealth in your courageous mission to the United States tomorrow." This message hadn't been authorised by "the workers of Britain" and certainly not by those of "the Commonwealth," and a number of those on whose behalf Mr. O'Brien claimed to speak pointed this out to him with some force. But the habit of claiming vast authority for one's statements is not confined to Mr. O'Brien. The heads of the Communist Party or of the C.P. front organisations frequently issue grandiloquent statements "on behalf of the workers of Great Britain" or "the women of Britain" or "the democratic youth of Western Europe." Among others who have recently indulged in these wide unauthorised statements is General Franco, who in his New Year's Message said he was "speaking as the father or guardian of the great family of Spaniards"—though "guardian" here may be a mistranslation for the far more appropriate word "warder." Again, on March 2nd Chief Simeon Kioko of the Kamba tribe in Kenya repudiated Mau Mau, and claimed to be speaking "on behalf of 400,000 Wakamba." In South Africa, the Governor-General, speaking on January 23rd, said "This year will see the Coronation of her Majesty the Queen. My ministers, as do the people of the Union, pray that her Majesty may have a long, blessed and peaceful reign." Who gave the Governor-General the authority to say this? It seems particularly inappropriate, in that "the people of the Union" include a million Afrikaaners, many of whom are fanatical Republicans.

Unhappy workpeople

But one of the most fantastic claims made recently was in connection with the return of Alfred Krupp to much of his industrial empire, plus the fortune which will be his when he sells, compulsorily, his interests in coal and steel; the latter are being turned over to a holding company with a capital of a hundred million marks. Incidentally, Herr Krupp has given an undertaking to keep out of coal and steel; but after the expiry of Allied High Commission Law 27 in a few years' time this promise will not be legally enforceable. The massed legal experts of the Allied High Commission and the German Government have found themselves unable to think of any formula which could give legal force to this undertaking; which is another instance of the tenderness with which the perpetrators of the really large crimes are treated. (Krupp was convicted in 1948 of war-crimes on a grand scale, and was sentenced to 12 years' imprisonment plus confiscation of all his property; much of the first part, and all the second part, of this sentence was remitted in 1951 by Mr. McCloy, then United States High Commissioner in Germany.) Last August, however, when the details of Krupp's return to his industrial empire were not yet settled, Dr. Maschke, the concern's chief legal adviser, said (*Sunday Express*, 17-8-52): "This is a family enterprise. We are not happy—thousands

of the workpeople are not happy—to see him left in the background."

So if you hear sounds of jubilation coming from the general direction of Germany, you know what it is. What you hear is the heartfelt cries of joy uttered by the work people of the Rhineland as the word goes round that the boss is back.

Little-known pastimes: Money rolling

The Chancery Division has been trying to unravel the tangles in the will of Mr. Bolton Joberns, a brick manufacturer who died three years ago. Not the least puzzling part is the allegation in one codicil that the "so-called poor" were now "rolling in money." On the face of it, it would seem impossible to roll with any degree of comfort in a weekly wage of five or seven pounds; though one is reluctant to dissent from the opinion of one who was so clearly an expert in the little-known sport of money-rolling as Mr. Joberns,

who left more than £200,000. But examine the phrase "the so-called poor." Who are the so-called poor nowadays? Not the real poor; both the Tories and the Labourites, for their own reasons, assert that poverty has been abolished. The term "poor" is in these days reserved exclusively for the upper class, as in the phrases "the new poor" and "the tax-ridden industrialist." From a careful reading of the newspapers one can only draw the conclusion that in these enlightened times one must have at least £50 a week after tax before one can call oneself poor; poverty is reduced as the incomes get less, and anyone receiving less than £10 a week is supposed in the neighbourhood of Fleet Street to be living on the fat of the land. It is those people, then, who used to be called rich but are now the "so-called poor," that Mr. Joberns must have been referring to; and with his opinion that these "so-called poor" are now "rolling in money" we shouldn't like to disagree.

A.W.E.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND POWER POLITICS

TOWARDS the end of the last war when the United Nations Organisation first hit the headlines, many war-weary workers turned hopeful eyes towards this colossus which bestrode the world and was pledged to many high ideals, including the termination of all war. The older generation of workers recalled the League of Nations, its lofty aims and resolutions, puny performance and ignominious collapse. U.N.O., however, seemed a more promising infant than the League; the size and sweep of its conception to include all nations, large and small in a combined bid for "Peace" seemed to thousands of workers a power for good. It developed with much publicity and hatched out an awe-inspiring number of off-spring in the shape of various Councils, Committees and Associations: Specialised Agencies were linked to it on a basis of mutual help: International bodies worked in conjunction with it. The Secretariat alone (known as the World Civil Service) employs 3,000 office workers.

The Charter (1945) setting forth the aims of the organisation is over-flowing with resolutions for international peace and security, friendly relations among nations, and international co-operation in solving international problems. (Article 1.) In addition to this somewhat long-winded Charter, a "Declaration of human rights" was published in December, 1948, by the U.N. Association at Paris.

Sad to relate, since the inception of this vast and complicated body with its avowed intention of establishing peace, wars of varying degrees and intensity have been and still are, raging. The cumbersome machinery of U.N.O., dodders and creaks along to the sound of gunfire in sundry parts of the globe. The troops in S. Korea fight under the title of U.N. Forces. This and the state of tension between the Western Bloc and U.S.S.R. makes mock of the high-sounding hypocritical phrases of the Charter.

The book now under review "The United Nations and Power Politics" is by John MacLaurin, publishers George Allen and Unwin, Ltd., London, 1951. It is a large book (450 pages) and deals comprehensively

not only with the functioning of U.N.O., but gives detailed and graphic accounts of various problems which have come before the Organisation, some dealt with successfully according to its lights, but in most cases a dismal record of outright failure. We read of the deeply rooted animosities between the delegates of the great powers; their hypocrisy, and "holier than thou" attitude towards each other; the vetoes, adjournments, juggling for advantage; the strange bed-fellows who come together when policy dictates and when there is an axe to grind. MacLaurin says that many delegates show little respect for the purposes of U.N.O., by their verbal sparring, sarcasm and scoring off each other. Tribute is paid to much good work done by the supplementary organisations such as the Food and Agricultural Organisation, World Health Organisation and many others.

The delegates of the smaller nations show up in a more favourable light, probably because they have not such a large stake in world affairs. In 1949 at the 4th Session of the General Assembly a feeling of revolt developed among the delegates of the smaller powers over the worsening relations between U.S., U.K., and Russia. The Syrian delegate, Mr. El Khouri, denounced the cold war in biting terms and suggested that the small nations should get together and form a third camp, thus holding the balance in their hands.

"When questions arise that do not closely touch the political and economic objectives of a government it will turn them over to a delegate whose heart is in the question, contenting itself with very general instructions and leaving the delegate a large measure of freedom." It is repeatedly demonstrated that the nations work together amicably on humanitarian and relief matters but come to grief over power politics. Regarding U.N.R.R.A. (the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) MacLaurin says there was good co-operation between the governments and technicians, so long as political and "grab" motives were absent.

On 5th April, 1949, the General Assembly of

U.N.O. opened its session in New York one day after the Atlantic pact was signed, a pact which splits the world into two armed camps and makes nonsense of the Organisation's undertaking that all nations shall combine to ensure peace. Maclaurin quotes the *American Daily News* of 4-4-49. "With the adoption of the North Atlantic Pact, the last reason for the United Nations' existence will vanish . . . The U.S. State Department is bellowing that the pact is strictly within the U.N. framework and will strengthen that organisation. The U.S.S.R. is staying in the U.N.O. instead of hauling out and urging a painless end to the U.N.'s miserable existence."

Many of the disputes brought before the Security Council, such as Israel and Indonesia, dragged on week in and week out while fighting raged, in spite of "resolutions" calling on the combatants to cease fire.

In his concluding chapters, the author reviews the world position and the "drift to war." Regarding the Western Bloc's design to "contain Russian expansion," he says, "With the stock-pile of atom bombs, the huge navy, the fleets of bombers, the air bases ringing the U.S.S.R., the 500 odd military bases of all sorts on the territories of other people, the military alliances, *inter alia* closing the Baltic and Mediterranean, it is certainly difficult to distinguish containing Russia from expanding American military dominance . . . American military, political and economic might has expanded over the earth to an extent hitherto unknown in history."

He touches on the "balance of power" doctrine which, he says, is inevitably interpreted by its advocates as "balance in my favour . . . and has led in the past is leading in the present and will lead in the future to the armaments race and the scramble for political

supremacy . . . and the outcome is war."

The fostering of nationalism inflames nations against one another. Maclaurin says "There is a magic phrase that serves our governments as armour served the Knights of old, both for armaments and defence. The phrase is National interests."

He writes of the "little man's revolt" and says the world's unease stems from two sources: "The revolt of the oppressed and the economic and political rivalries of the direct and indirect rulers of nation states." Here we part company finally with the author for he suggests that the machinery of U.N.O. is suitable for world government, the only way out of the present impasse. This is anticlimax with a vengeance after reading how ineffective and restricted the machinery is, and how it can be, and is, perverted in pursuit of cold war aims. Even if U.N.O. were a united world organisation and able to take over world government, the two conflicts would still remain, i.e., enmity between capitalist groups, and enmity between the "haves" and "have nots." If the latter conflict were resolved by an enlightened working class movement establishing socialism, the former conflict would automatically cease to exist, and wars would be a thing of the past.

In conclusion we may say, the author has a lively style of writing which helps us over some of the dull patches, he weighs the motives of the great powers and slates them all impartially. (It is difficult to detect but there is an impression of a very slight bias in favour of U.S.S.R.) His remarks are uncompromising and trenchant and he obviously has no delusions regarding the objectives of the great powers in the game of power politics.

F.M.R.

"I'VE ALWAYS BEEN RESPECTABLE"

THE peace of mind of ordinary English people has been disturbed! A widow has been sued for possession of her flat at Bow County Court, on the ground that she was an annoyance to other tenants in the house. The annoyance was visits by a man she intended to marry.

"The thought of a couple living in the house adulterously, perhaps, and certainly immorally—worried them," said the prosecuting lawyer. When asked "What is your attitude to this man living with this woman?" a tenant of the basement replied, "I take a very poor view of it. I've been married 28 years and I've always been respectable."

Counsel for the Defence: "The fact that two people who are sleeping together have no marriage lines, doesn't make their conduct an annoyance to people in an adjoining flat."

Judge: "The average women in the East End doesn't like to have an unmarried woman living as though she were married next door to her. They come here in their scores and tell me so."

Counsel for Prosecution: "The poorer classes are very often much more fastidious in these matters than the top layer."

Judge: "We won't say the top layer. We'll say the wealthier classes . . . anything that disturbs the

peace of mind of other inhabitants of a house is an annoyance. This sort of conduct is something that I am pleased to say in these days still disturbs the peace of mind of ordinary sensible English people."

Making an order for possession, suspended so long as visits ceased, the Judge told the widow, "If you choose to sleep with Mr. —, I can't prevent it, but you must choose somewhere else!" Or, as a certain Mr. Henry Ford used to say, "The customers can have any colour they like, as long as it's black."

In such cases is much material for study. The "poorer classes" are more fastidious about "marriage lines" than the wealthy ones. They are very worried if somebody lives next door as though they are married, when they are not. They are unlike the proprietors of some expensive West End hotels, which provide accommodation mainly for persons not married to each other.

These hoteliers would get "very worried" if their guests were married couples, since then they would be on the way out.

In addition to all their other advantages and privileges (No Taxation or Death Duties, no financial worries, no servant problem, no wrangles about places in the Coronation procession; or what to do with the old ancestral hall, or Kenya or the Soudan) the poorer

classes have, as their most cherished possession, their respectability. Come rain or shine, fair weather or foul, nobody can deprive them of this most precious jewel.

Rich men may marry a new film-star every year; even in the basement, we're respectable.

Neither does this extend to "marriage lines" only, as every inhabitant of those quarters occupied by the "poorer classes" knows; behind those threadbare "respectable" curtains lurks the prying eye, the sharp inquisitive nose eager for the slightest sign of a minor slip or lapse. Let Mrs. Brown forget to whiten her doorstep when the snow is on the ground; how the bush telegraph crackles over the garden wall!

Crammed together in numbers which ants would find uncomfortable, in parts of dilapidated houses at the rate of more than 2½ to one small room; not merely next to each other, but literally on top of each other, dependent upon a husband whose job is so deadly dull and monotonous that a Coronation Tea party is a thrilling adventure, their greatest experience a visit to a cheap local cinema, small wonder that their main pre-occupation is to be "cleaner," "brighter," "nicer" or when all else fails, more "respectable" than the woman next door. "Them mats haven't been touched these last two days!"

"Marriage lines" is the popular slang term for the Registrar's Certificate, issued under the Matrimonial Act to persons legally entitled to it. This Act ensures chiefly that monogamy (one wife or husband only) is observed, the breach of this, bigamy, being severely punished as a criminal offence. "Sleeping together" without these "lines" annoys scores of poorer women in the East End, though whether many or few do this, we cannot say.

Though not guilty of infringement of the Matrimonial Act, the lady in question, a widow, had no "marriage lines" for her visitor, which annoyed the other tenants. They, unlike heathens and foreigners, are "respectable."

These rules of the matrimonial game, or "gamble," as it is sometimes called, are the result of the growth of private property. Monogamy is essential to ensure that a fortune goes to a man's own children, it is the maintenance of private property. Since it is a social law of Capitalism, the poor, like the rich, must not flout it openly. Had the lady been rich she would not have appeared in Court, since she would not have rented a flat in Bow.

Neither could she have been sued for possession

of her own property. She could invite as many visitors to as many of her houses as she chose. Had her "visitor" been wealthy, he could have invited her anywhere he pleased (yachts are popular) without risking Court proceedings, seagulls not having heard of "marriage lines." As is well known, some very wealthy people still practice what in earlier days, or other places, was commonplace, the maintenance of an "unofficial" harem as an advertisement of opulence.

As long as working class women are condemned to grim, mean little lives of grinding poverty, "respectability" will be a straw to clutch at in face of premature age and hopeless exhaustion. The lady suffered from a lack of what becomes yearly more expensive and unobtainable; personal privacy. This is a form of poverty. The occupants of a typical house of working-class "flats" have about as much seclusion as a professional footballer on Saturday afternoons.

As our "modern conveniences" increase, so our lives become more inconvenient. As if the Atom Bomb, gastritis, influenza, the Floods and the Mau Mau are not enough "disturbance," that woman upstairs "has got 'im 'ere again. There's too many in the house already without her bringing more in."

In his vastly entertaining account of his stay in the Marquesas Islands entitled "Typee," subsequently authenticated, the American writer Melville, comments wittily on the happy lot of the Polynesian in the 1840's.

"There seemed to be no cares, griefs, troubles or vexations in all Typee. The hours tripped along as gaily as the laughing couples down a country dance." He says there were "no bills or mortgages, no lawyers, no beggars, no prisons, no 'proud nabobs'—in a word—no money." (Page 136, Penguin Edition.)

"No cross old women, no cruel step-dames, no withered spinsters, no love-sick maidens, no sour old bachelors, no inattentive husbands, no melancholy young men, no squalling brats. All was mirth, fun, and high good humour." (Page 136.)

To which should be appended "no marriage lines" because there was no private property.

Should the reader be contemplating speedy departure to this haven let us disillusion him. From the introduction we quote, "The modern visitor would find little trace of the life described in 'Typee,' for the population which at one time was 100,000, has dwindled to less than 2,000; contact with whites has brought syphilis, leprosy and tuberculosis," and, may we add, *Respectability*?

HORATIO.

BOYCOTT IN WEST AFRICA

A reader sends us the following letter and asks for our comments:—

S.W. London.

The Editorial Committee,
Dear Comrades,

On February 14th the *West Africa* weekly newspaper (published in London and of the same company as the *Daily Mirror*) published an amusing letter. Although no doubt their 9,000 white shareholders would have us take it seriously.

It concerns the regional propriety interests in western Nigeria. Apparently the leader of the nationalist party of that region has imposed a boycott

on the Governor because he considers that the collection of white whisky-boozers are too slow. There has been some delay in the approval of the western regional local government. Poor Sir John won't be able to attend any more cocktail parties in the West for a while.

Instead he will probably relax in his palatial government house receiving Labour Party delegations all wanting to "save Africa." But now, this letter raises the age-old question of how far is one capitalist group prepared to compromise with another? Mr. Haig glibly says:

"In your issue of January 10, you describe Mr.

Awolowo's boycott of Sir John Macpherson as "a clumsy weapon." Is this really all you have to say about this piece of colossal bad manners, bad psychology and bad policy? I wonder in what terms you would describe a British boycott of a leading African personality.

"Forgive me saying that this regrettable under-statement of yours is typical of your growing tendency to appease the African nationalist even at the cost of good sense and common decency. It is not fair to your African readers, many of whom are inevitably short of education and experience. These readers are exposed, in their own countries, to many newspapers which distort and suppress news, and base their comments not on truth and reason but on the illogical frenzy characterising the emotional nationalist throughout the world.

"You, at least, should give them candid and honest comment based on truth and the accepted standards of Christian civilisation.

"I suggest that Mr. Awolowo's boycott of the Queen's representative in Nigeria, and one of the best friends Nigerians have ever had, is a disgrace both to him and his party and to the traditional courtesy of the Yoruba people."

In some respects this letter can be applied generally to Africa and expresses a very unobservant

opinion although perhaps that too is an under-statement. However, would the Socialist Party of Great Britain care to examine the letter itself and answer it?

Yours sincerely,

NIGERIAN STUDENT.

COMMENT.

Our comments can be very brief. Those who administer capitalism in Britain are not interested in emancipating the British workers from capitalist exploitation nor in emancipating African workers. Likewise the West African-born Capitalist and Nationalist political parties, while interested in ending dominance by British capitalism, are not interested in emancipating West African workers from capitalism.

As Socialists aiming at the establishment of Socialism and the emancipation of all workers everywhere, we are all in favour of one kind of boycott. We look forward to the time when British, African and all other workers will join together in a boycott of capitalism, and all its political supporters and hangers-on, and will gain control of the machinery of government for the purpose of establishing Socialism.

In the meantime there is bound to be the arrogant attitude of the "Empire builders" as exemplified in the letter referred to by our correspondent.

ED. COM.

RINGING THE CHANGES

The following quotation has a familiar ring about it.

"Their (the workers) output . . . was not enough to warrant the continuance of the high wages they were getting. The workers . . . wanted to get everything and give as little as possible in exchange. There were too many missed shifts, too many people who pretended to be ill, too many fines, too much movement of labour from one factory to another, too much stealing, too much carelessness in handling machinery." (*Economist*, 27 Sept. 1952.)

How often have we seen phrases like this? The familiarity of its tone, bred of constant repetition, rings in our ears like a cracked bell. We in this island are by no means the only ones to suffer its infliction. It also applies to the so-called "peoples democracies" on the other side of the Iron Curtain.

In fact, the quotation is from a report of a speech made by Mr. Zapotocky, the Prime Minister of Czechoslovakia in 1948. Old history? Perhaps! But Mr. Zapotocky, like all other devout worshippers of capitalism, is never tired of ringing the changes (though needless to say we're tired to death) or as the *Economist* has it: "Comrade Zapotocky has been saying the same thing at intervals ever since." No doubt he will continue.

Why he has been saying it, will make more apparent the fact that Czechoslovakia, like all other countries has a class divided society. The working class there is distressingly stubborn about accepting the fairy tales of their rulers; are exasperating in their refusal to believe that everything is for their benefit in a land that they are told is "building Socialism." So much so, that the Trades Unions are again being "re-organised."

After the Communists came to power in February, 1948, the Unions underwent purification.

"At that moment, which coincided with the nationalisation of nearly all industrial undertakings, the workers had, theoretically, won their victory against capitalism and the original raison d'être of the unions—the protection of the workers against capitalist exploitation—came abruptly to an end. But instead of dissolving the unions, the Communist Party skilfully incorporated them into the state organisation and gave them the new task of 'educating' the workers into being worthy of the hire meted out to them by the politicians who have taken over from the dispossessed private capitalists."

Of course, the Communists were not likely to dissolve the unions. Well trained in the methods of State Capitalism, with the ever watchful eye of their mentor the Soviet Union guiding them, the Communists, with a copious supply of bogus Socialist theory, were able to re-organise the unions and turn them to their own advantage, under the pretence that now the "Socialist Revolution" had been accomplished, the original function of the unions had become redundant. Quite true. The nature of State Capitalism (which is the form Czech Capitalism has taken on the model of the Soviet Union) is such, that, under it, all the aspects of capitalist society are drawn into a unified whole; brought to a head. Control is centralised and complete.

Trade unionism is an aspect of Capitalist Society; Capitalism is a class Society and the interests of the ruling class predominate. Therefore, when all the aspects of capitalism are drawn into a Central organisation—the State—the Trades Unions automatically come under the control of the ruling class. They are then transformed from a protective, working class, organisation, into instruments for driving the workers to greater and more efficient production.

Mr. Zapotocky in a speech on July 18th, 1952, gave the following, as the three principal functions of

trades unions in a "Peoples Democracy." They are: "To reduce production costs." (Wages?)

"To consolidate working discipline and develop Socialist competition." "At present," he added, "the unions definitely are not fulfilling their tasks. That is why they must be reorganised."

So far the "Stick" method has been in operation for goading the workers into production marathons. This has not proved as successful as was at first hoped. So now the more "scientific," "carrot" technique is being employed. The Czechs are now to be "persuaded" to produce more.

The trades union leaders have been sent on special courses of "political education," with the object of bringing the Czech workers into a state of mind that will make them "produce more than yesterday."

"The workers, in short, must be 'persuaded' by hook, crook, whips or scorpions to give up the old eight hour day in favour of a system under which they must go on working with no extra pay until their 'Norm' has been fulfilled. They must be 'persuaded' to welcome the introduction of arbitrary and often unpaid extra week-end shifts and to give up their 'Bolsheviks Saturday' which the miners won in 1921, at the whim of the Government . . .

"When they do not close the gap between output and wages, the real wages are cut by raising either norms or prices or both alternately; in addition, the hard-won privileges the workers fought for against private capitalism are taken away or transformed into a machine for keeping their noses well down to the nationalised grindstone." (*Ibid*).

The mixture as before, but more highly concentrated and with a nastier taste. Administered with a very large and efficient spoon.

I.D.J.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Conference, 1953. As usual, the annual conference is being held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, April 3rd, 4th and 5th. Business commences each day at 11 a.m. Dance will be held on the Saturday evening and Annual Rally on Sunday evening. This is a last minute reminder.

* * *

Outdoor Propaganda commences in April and all members should make a special effort to support the meetings held by their branches and assist with the sale of literature. It is impossible to run successful propaganda meetings without the support of the members and it does stimulate the speakers if they know they have the backing of other members.

* * *

New Members may like to know that our internal party journal, "Forum" (monthly, 6d.), is on sale through branches, or by postal subscription, 6 months 3s. 9d. 12 months 7s. 6d. The current issue is the seventh, and back numbers of all except the first (Oct. 1952) issue are available from H.O.

* * *

A Circular recently sent out urges every subscriber to the SOCIALIST STANDARD to go all out to increase the sales of S.P.G.B. literature, and especially of the SOCIALIST STANDARD. Finding new readers is an

excellent way of spreading socialist knowledge, and also of helping us to increase the printed matter itself, so don't forget to post us your order for literature. P.H.

SOCIALISM AND QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

We have now prepared a pamphlet under the above title which we are sending to the printer. Unfortunately we have no money in hand at the moment to meet the cost. Will members and sympathisers send us what donations they can immediately so that we can pay for deliveries of the pamphlet as they come. It will be a pity if we cannot have this pamphlet on sale for the summer propaganda season.

The question is urgent so send us money as quickly as you can.

PUBLIC MEETING

at

ST. PANCRAS TOWN HALL,

EUSTON ROAD, N.W.1

(Nr. St. Pancras Station)

SUNDAY, 12th APRIL at 7.30 p.m.

WHICH WAY TO PEACE?

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN APRIL

Mondays: Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.
Fridays: Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.
Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
 Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
 Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
 Hyde Park, 6 p.m.
Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.
 White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11 a.m.
 East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
 Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
 Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

ISLINGTON BRANCH LECTURE

at Co-op. Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd.,
 on Thursday, 30th April at 8 p.m.
 "Socialism, Government and Violence."
 Speaker: A. Turner.

ISLINGTON MEETING

at Central Library, Holloway Rd., N.7
 (2 minutes from Highbury and Holloway Rd. Tube Stations),
 on Wednesday, 22nd April at 8 p.m.
 "War Heroes and Conscientious Objectors."
 Speaker: H. Waite.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month at 7.15 p.m., at Kingsley Hall, Old Market Street, Bristol. Secretary: J. Flowers, 8, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2.

COVENTRY—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 8th and 22nd April, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in each month at Co-op Club, "Oakfield", Bilton Road., at 7.30 p.m. Correspondence to C. Walsh, 57 Bridget Street, Rugby.

SWANSEA.—D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (nr. "Met" Music Hall). Sec. T. J. Law, 180 Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hallard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.15.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Peters, London Road, Wickford. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at Digbeth Institute. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. First and third Thursdays in April (2nd and 16th), Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., C. Phillips, 4 Lowell House, Sultan Terrace, S.E.5.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 55, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Beccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Beccles. Secretary, F. Lea. Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Hall, 59 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Alkenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, April 6th and 20th at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stoneyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to A. Iveney, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to Secretary, 22, Sanderstead Avenue, N.W.2.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. D. Courtney, 53 Canonbury Park South, N.1.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 446, Staines Road, Twickenham. Branch meets Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at the above address. Tel. Feltham 4006.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets Tuesdays, 7th and 21st April, at 7.45 p.m., Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate. Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 585 Vol. 49 May, 1953

ELECTORAL ACTIVITY

MAY DAY AND THE HERITAGE OF THE PAST

SLINGS AND ARROWS

ABOUT BOOKS

ELECTIONS IN AUSTRIA— THE VALUE OF THE VOTE

SIDELIGHT ON THE U.S.A.

MR. ALDRED INTERVENES

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

Cracks in the Russian Dictatorship

THE SIGNS THAT the stranglehold of the Communist Party dictatorship is faltering are the most heartening news out of Russia for a generation. The nature of the urgent pressures compelling the changes of policy has yet to be revealed, but whatever they are they give ground for hope that the Russian workers may before long begin to acquire the elementary rights of organisation and propaganda so long denied them. In the early days—before they became so mealy-mouthed about it—the Communists admitted and defended the dictatorship and decried “bourgeois democracy.” Their text-book was Trotsky’s “Defence of Terrorism”—this of course in the days before a new party group moved into control, exiled Trotsky and found that he was a “capitalist agent”

MAY DAY RALLY

SUNDAY, MAY 3rd

3 p.m. HYDE PARK

SPEAKERS: D'ARCY, TURNER, YOUNG

and at

7 p.m. 52 CLAPHAM HIGH STREET

“MAY DAY AND YOU”

Later on, with an eye on votes at elections, the British Communists denied that the Russian regime is a dictatorship and claimed it to be “true democracy.” For evidence they pointed to the embodiment of numerous rights in the Constitution; as if similar paper “rights” are not the stock-in-trade of all dictatorships from Franco’s to Peron’s and Tito’s. Since, in Russia, only one political party is allowed by law and only a very small minority of the population were able to belong to a political party at all; since there are no democratic elections, only the “right” to vote in each constituency for the one candidate approved by the Communists; and since nobody can publish political propaganda or hold meetings except under Communist Party control, the Constitutional rights are not worth the paper they are written on.

Now there is this sudden change of attitude, including permission to American journalists to visit Russia, move about freely, take photographs and report more or less what they liked.

At the same time Russian foreign policy has likewise undergone a drastic change.

The Case of the Doctors.

The other outstanding reversal of policy was the announcement that the nine doctors arrested for murder and attempted murder of Russian leaders had been released and their accusers arrested instead.

The Russian official announcement of the release of 15 doctors (hitherto the existence of six of them had not been disclosed, only nine having been mentioned as having been arrested), read as follows:—

"As a result of verification it has been established that Professors [here followed 15 names] implicated in the case were wrongfully arrested by the former Ministry of State Security of the U.S.S.R. without any legal grounds.

"The verification has shown that the charges against the above-mentioned persons were false and the documentary data on which the investigation workers based themselves were unfounded.

"It has been established that the testimony of the arrested men, allegedly confirming the charges made against them was obtained by workers of the investigating section of the former Ministry of State Security through the use of methods of investigation which are inadmissible and most strictly forbidden by the Soviet law."

(Daily Worker, 6 April, 1953.)

Naturally the *Daily Worker* tried to make the best of this acutely embarrassing disclosure by presenting it as proof of the "justice and strength" of the new government. What they were not able to show, because it did not and could not happen under the Russian dictatorship, was that at any time between the arrests and the release, any journal in Russia, or any public figure, or any political party, or any member of the Russian "parliament," or any lawyer, publicly stated inside Russia that there were doubts about the guilt of the arrested doctors. From the moment of the first announcement the men were treated as guilty, both in Russia and in the columns of the *Daily Worker*, yet there must have been many people in Russia well aware of the kind of methods used to obtain admissions of guilt—and in any event the arrested doctors had never even been tried.

It is this latter circumstance that makes nonsense of the line now taken by the *Daily Worker* of pretending that the doctors never were held to be guilty, but only charged and awaiting trial. Replying to an article in which the *Daily Mail* had said that the men "were found guilty of crimes they had not committed," the *Daily Worker* in an editorial on 8 April, 1953, wrote:—

"As is frequent in matters concerning the Soviet Union the *Mail* is quite wrong. The doctors had not been found guilty, for the simple reason that at the time of their release they had not yet been brought to trial."

As it happens we need only look back over issues of the *Daily Worker* to see whether it is true that the men were held by that journal merely to have been persons arrested on a charge but not yet deemed to be guilty.

The *Daily Worker* of 14 January not only reproduced the Russian Tass Agency report which referred to them as "guilty" and "criminals" but the *Worker* added, on the authority of its own Foreign Editor, that "five of the nine doctors . . . got their orders from 'Joint'—the American Joint Distribution Committee." Another report in the same issue described them as "medical killers who became monsters of the human race, who trampled the holy banner of science, who

dishonoured science, were paid agents of a foreign intelligence service."

In the issue of 28 January the report of a speech by Mr. Harry Pollitt contained a jibe at the capitalist Press and the "Right Wing Labour statesmen" for their attitude to the case of the doctors. He said:—

"We understand their fury at seeing their pals caught red-handed before they have been able to do all they were ordered to do."

The Communist excuse for holding them guilty before their trial was that they had "confessed." Thus an article in the *Daily Worker* of 23 January replied to a criticism made by Vernon Bartlett by saying:—

" . . . the Moscow doctors are being denounced for crimes which they have confessed to committing." (Italics are the *Daily Worker's*).

It went on to say that Vernon Bartlett's paper does not accept evidence given at such trials anyway.

Now the admission by the Russian Government that the "confessions" were extorted and were false not only destroys the validity of confessions in this case but casts doubts on the confessions and on the "evidence" in all the long series of trials under the dictatorship, thus confirming what other evidence had long suggested.

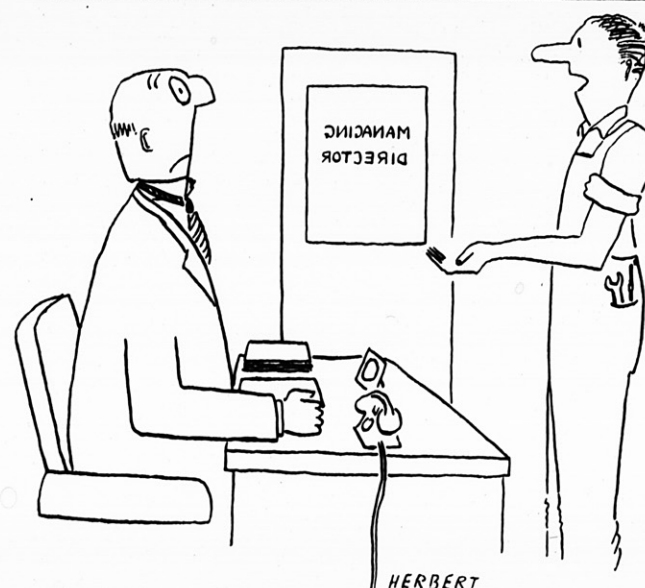
Of course we still do not know the whole truth about the doctor case. They were made to confess that they were paid agents of a foreign organisation but now their accusers are arrested. Will these accusers now be tried in public and tell the whole story about the source from which they got their orders, and about the circumstances under which Ministry of State Security officials regarded it as part of their job to extort false confessions? And shall we be told why six of the doctors now released were not reported to have been arrested? Can it be that they had not confessed?

With the decision to release the doctors the Russian authorities also gave a declaration that

"Every Soviet citizen can go assured that his personal freedom and civic rights are fully guaranteed under the Constitution of the U.S.S.R.—and Soviet law will strictly observe and defend these rights." (*Daily Worker*, 7 April).

Such assurances are worth nothing. They could become more of a reality if the Russian workers were allowed to form political parties of their own choice—but this will involve a more drastic change in Russia than any so far reported.

H.



"I agreed with every word you said about working hard and saving. Well, I work hard, now can I have something to save?"

May Day and the Heritage of the Past

In the early years of this century there was a ferment of co-operative ideas in the International Labour Movement that two world wars since appear to have killed.

In those years mass meetings attended by thousands of workers were held on the 1st of May. At a conference of the 2nd International in 1889 this day was set aside for international demonstrations in favour of the eight-hour day; subsequently they became demonstrations in favour of working class international solidarity and from numerous platforms, attended by crowds in holiday dress complete with the banners of different groups, a varied assortment of speakers delivered passionate orations condemning the actions against strikes, the subjection of nations and groups, and glorifying the martyrdom of individuals. Speakers representing all sorts of groups took part, including Indians, Chinese, Russians and Negroes.

Over the years changing national and internal line-ups have so altered the aspect of affairs that the passion of May Day and its misguided hopes have departed. All, all are gone. The story of them must come as a tale from a strange world to the young generation of today. Even the passion that inspired the misguided rant against wrongs has departed with them, converted into the acceptance of privilege. Impassioned radicals became bulwarks of governments based upon privilege; fiery denouncers of imperialist oppression took their places amongst the privilege supporting a new imperialism in the erstwhile subject nations; bitter spokesmen of subject groups came to the top and in their turn exercised as ruthless an oppression as their privileged forebears. Underneath it all, and cutting across all frontiers as of yore, there still remained the fundamental class cleavage between propertied and propertyless, between the relatively small section of the world's population which occupies the seat of privilege, reaping power, leisure and luxury, and the vast mass which remains the pedestal upon which power and privilege rest; labouring that others may enjoy.

The budding international solidarity of the past has been swallowed up by the armed and antagonistic camps of to-day, but our independent May Day message still remains as urgent and as alive as when it was first delivered, the message of Socialism, the only message of hope, of solidarity, of certainty in a world of hatred, strife and uncertainty.

This message has its roots far back in the past. The germs of communistic ideas go back centuries, but the germs of socialistic ideas, as we know them to-day, were synonymous with the growth of capitalism. Their vague beginnings are to be found amongst a group of French writers who were raising a ferment in the 18th century, when Capitalism was rising to its feet. Borrowing from Hobbes, Locke and their contemporaries, these writers put forward ideas some of which fit the present in spite of their somewhat confused context.

The earliest of these French writers appears to have been Jean Meslier, who, in "The Testament of Jean Meslier," at the beginning of the 18th century, used phrases that sound singularly modern. These are some of his ideas: He was opposed to property, believing in the common control of the wealth of society. He argued that among the evils which oppressed mankind and called for reform the worst was private property. Pro-

perty meant inequality; inequality led to injustice and oppression. The rich were respected and honoured, while the poor must toil in neglect. Property was a cause of idleness; the idle rich class found its complement in an idle poor class. This latter class was made up of the unemployed, who, because of the existing system, had nothing to do and were hence in poverty. Cupidity and its attendants, ambition and greed, are the evils in a society based upon property. Property does not unite people; but through jealousy tends to break up social harmony, and hence destroys social unity. Fraud, deception, theft and murder find their cause in property. Society might be happy were goods made common and equality secured. The basis of equality is equality of economic condition.

Later on another writer, Morelly, carried some of the ideas further. He had a definite plan for the future in which each would labour according to his ability and share according to need. He argued that it was not labour but the conditions of labour that people objected to. That there would be no exchange as goods would be stored and distributed according to needs. On property he made the following remarks:—

"From the sceptre to the shepherd's crook, from the tiara to the meanest monk's frock, if one asks who governs men, the answer is simple; personal interest or the interest of others which vanity makes one adopt and which is always dependent on the first. But where do these monsters get power? From property." P. 100-101 "Code de la Nature," 1755.

He denied the existence of innate ideas as also did his contemporary (Hévétius), who said:

"The ideas supposed to be innate are those that are familiar to and as it were incorporated with us; they are the effect of education, example, and habit." P.15 "System of Nature."

Barnave, another of Morelly's contemporaries, saw a bit farther than the rest. He could see the rise of classes and considered the part which economic changes played in history.

Morelly laid down definite plans for a new social order based on natural rights, the heritage of everyone born into society. There was no room for historical development in the systems of those who thought like him; history and its results had no value. Society did not grow out of the past, the present had to be obliterated root and branch, to make way for the future. This form of thought, together with the revolutionary tradition, dominated radical movements until the publication of the Communist Manifesto in 1848. Morelly's merit was that he looked for the cause of social evils in society as organised in his day; the environmental theory later pressed so vigorously by Robert Owen.

The Babuef "Conspiracy of the Equals" at the end of the French Revolution drew from these early French sources, justifying their rising, like the Trotskyists, on the ground that the Revolution had got off the track. They advocated the conspiratorial seizure of power.

One of the members of the "Society of Equals" who escaped from France formed the Babouvist movement after the Fall of Napoleon. The object of the movement was to carry on where Babuef had left off. This movement became tied more and more closely to the workers' movement in France, finally becoming a definite working-class party under Blanqui and exercising

a considerable influence upon the French risings of February and June, 1848.

In the beginning of the 19th Century the Revolutionary tradition was carried on, associated with the Utopian experiments of Owen, Fourier, Cabet and Weitling, but in a less turbulent fashion than formerly. Weitling studied in Western Germany, where working men's clubs were being formed for reading and discussion. At these clubs radical literature was available to those who otherwise would not have had the means to obtain it. Weitling had considerable influence on those who founded the "League of the Just"—a secret society with communistic ideas that eventually merged into the Communist League, that published the Communist Manifesto.

In England machine production brought ruin to masses of hand workers and by simplifying productive operations, introduced women and children into factories and mines to work under conditions that were appalling. It was the hand workers who were the prime movers in the revolt against the new world of industry, and who sought a way out of their difficulties; first, by incendiarism and machine breaking, and later by vague visions of some sort of co-operative world based upon small proprietorships.

Some of the earliest reactions to the industrial revolution were political reform associations, the Utopian schemes of Robert Owen, and the land reform ideas of Thomas Spence and William Ogilvie. Owen argued that abundance was the cause of crises and misery. This turned the attention of some writers to an examination of economics. They came to the conclusion that as "labour was the source of all wealth" the labourer was entitled to the fruits of industry. Ricardo's book, "Principles of Political Economy," published in 1817, established that labour was the source of value and, working on his conclusions, writers like Thompson, Hodgskin and Bray demanded that all products should belong to the labourer.

Under the inspiration of the American War of Independence, a corresponding society was formed in 1780 under the title of "The Society for Constitutional Information." Its formation was mainly through the instrumentality of Major Cartwright and Horne Tooke. It had a programme that included the Six Points that later formed the basis of the "People's Charter." The French Revolution gave a fillip to the movement for reform and corresponding societies sprang up all over the country, engaging in bitter and thinly-veiled attacks

on the government. In 1792 the first genuinely working-class movement commenced with the formation of the "London Corresponding Society" by Thomas Hardy, Robert Boyd and George Walne, holding its first meeting in January of that year. The motto of the Society was "Unite, Persevere and Be Free." It was formed for the purpose of corresponding with other societies that had the same ends in view. It only lasted a few years and repressive action compelled it to disperse, but agitation continued to simmer, finding expression in various ways, in lectures, Utopian writings, the publication of the "Gorgon," the first trade union paper, in 1818, and eventually the formation of a new London Corresponding Society, "The London Working Men's Association, in 1836. Members of this Association, such as Lovett, Cleave, Hetherington, Watson, Vincent and Harney, were afterwards active in the Chartist Movement. The Association published an address to Workingmen's Associations that concluded with the words, "Be assured that the good that is to be must be begun by ourselves." It also started the practice of sending addresses to working men of different countries, beginning with Belgium in November, 1836. One of its members, Lovett, drafted the "People's Charter," that started the Chartist Movement, and another, Harney, formed the "Fraternal Democrats," which brought the English movement in contact with the Continental.

In 1848 the genuinely Socialist movement began with the publication of the "Communist Manifesto." A brief history of the working-class movement from that time onwards will be found in the Introduction to our pamphlet, "The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years." An examination of this history will reveal how wayward the movement has been, and how ready to chase after will-o'-the-wisps. But the movement goes on and understanding is growing, although the struggle has been long and the disappointments bitter.

So this May Day we again call attention to the only bright gleam in the heavy clouds that hover over us—our message of hope. The determination to establish a new form of society in which everything that is in and on the earth shall be the common heritage of all mankind; where security, comfort and harmony will be the lot of all. All that is necessary for the establishment of this society is understanding and the will to achieve it.

GILMAC.

ABOUT BOOKS

A NUMBER of novelists, from time to time, have written books that revolve around some particular industry. The stories, if they are the product of a knowledge of the industry plus good writing, can be both informative and entertaining.

A really first-class book of this kind is "The Weeping Wood," by Vicki Baum, published in cheap edition by Michael Joseph for 6s. Here is the story of rubber from the days before the discovery of America, when the Amazon Indians found the tree which they called Cahuchu, meaning weeping wood, up to recent times, when the German I.G. Company and the American Standard Oil Company competed and co-operated to produce a synthetic rubber.

Each chapter of this story is a separate episode in the history of rubber; each chapter is a separate story linked by this main historical theme. Only in a few instances do the same characters appear in the different chapters. In the introduction the author tells us that the story,

"... contains as much fact as it contains play and make-believe; ... All the facts and figures, the details of history and background, all notations pertaining to rubber are authentic, as are, evidently, the documentary fragments scattered about. On the other hand, all the characters are inventions, bubbles of fantasy; all save the few historical ones which appear briefly in the course of these tales, but are also presented in more or less fictitious situations."

The story portrays for us how the Amazon Indians used Cahuchu gum to make toys for their children and how a Jesuit missionary brought a pair of sticky, smelly, moulded shoes to a high priest of his order, only to be outwitted and robbed of his discovery by an unscrupulous church financier and a native boy.

It then swings to the middle of the 19th century to tell of the struggles of Charles Goodyear to raise enough money to carry on his experiments to improve rubber fabrics, to make them impervious to heat and cold and to remove their evil smell whilst still retaining their elasticity.

We learn of the intense exploitation of men and women who lived tough and lonely lives in the Brazilian jungles gathering the gum; how seeds of the rubber tree were illegally exported from Brazil and sent to Kew, where seedlings were raised and shipped to Ceylon to start rubber plantations. The story then transports us to the rubber plantations of Sumatra to tell of planters and native workers; back again to America to show the methods used to intensify the labours of the workers in the rubber tyre factories at Akron and of the workers' struggles to organise in unions to resist their employers; return to Brazil after the crude rubber monopoly was lost to that country to see the effect of the one crop system on the native population; then to Germany during the last world war to tell of the frantic efforts to discover a synthetic substitute. The story ends in Washington, where efforts are still being made to find the perfect synthetic substitute, and where there is political manoeuvring to make America independent of world supplies of crude rubber.

Here is a story that reveals every unscrupulous trick and dirty device that has been conjured from the mind of man to wring profit from the exploited rubber workers, whether in the jungle, on the plantation, in the factory, or in the laboratory; it reveals the total indifference to human suffering in the scramble for profit from rubber; it shows how the booms and the slumps of capitalist trade, as well as its wars, have affected the rubber industry and the lives of the workers employed in it.

This is a good six shillings' worth. It is the only book of its kind that Vicki Baum has written. Her other novels may be good, but they have not the same social significance as "The Weeping Wood," they are as different from it as chalk is from cheese.

One of the foremost writers of this type of novel, perhaps THE foremost, was Upton Sinclair. In his early days he wrote magnificent stories round a number of different American industries. Some of them have recently been republished by Werner Laurie.

"The Jungle" (10s. 6d.), originally published in 1906, was the first of these books and the one that made Upton Sinclair famous. It caused an international sensation by revealing the horrible conditions that prevailed in the American meat canning industry. It caused an investigation to be made, followed by a revision of the Federal meat inspection laws by the U.S.A. Congress. It is a gruesome page in working-class industry and, despite its date, is still worth reading.

"Oil" (10s. 6d.) was first published in 1927 and, as the title implies, it deals with the oil industry.

"Little Steel" (8s. 6d.) has as its theme the struggle between workers and employers in the iron industry. First published in 1938.

"The Flivver King" (7s. 6d.) tells the story of Henry Ford and the workers in the American automobile industry. This is a particularly good story. First published in 1938.

These books by Upton Sinclair should not be confused with his "World's End Stories," which he has written in recent years. In our opinion the books in this series do not compare with his earlier work. There are many other books that Sinclair has written which have not been republished in late years, but which may sometimes be found on secondhand bookstalls. "Boston" is one. It narrates the story of Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, who were condemned to the electric chair in 1927. The "Socialist Standard" for September, 1927, had this to say of the Sacco and Vanzetti case:—

"The workers, generally speaking, have assumed their innocence, and have seen in the case the vindictiveness of a ruling class which manipulates the machinery of the law against property-less wage-earners."

"Mountain City" deals with the coal industry; "The Wet Parade" deals with prohibition in America, and "Sylvia's Marriage" deals with venereal disease. There are many more of Sinclair's books that we have never read and some that we have read but cannot recommend.

A more recent author who takes an industry for the theme of a novel is Thomas Armstrong. His first book, "The Crowthers of Bankdam," published by Collins for 10s. 6d., is outstandingly his best. He gives us the history of the English woollen industry during the past hundred years. The story opens at the time of the Crimean War, when hand looms were almost extinct, having been ousted by power-operated ones. Prior to that time many Yorkshire cottages had boasted a hand loom, but with the application of steam power, those who could muster a little capital brought small numbers of workers under a common roof to produce woollen cloth with the new power looms. Soon the hand looms were discarded and left cluttering up back gardens and waste plots of land where they were thrown, not worth their weight as junk.

This was the period in the woollen industry when small capitalists were laying the foundations of the vast fortunes that were later required to expand their mills and their trade and enable their descendants of today to survive in a world where gigantic amounts of capital are required to launch and maintain an industry.

Simeon Crowther was one of those early capitalists, a hardworking, frugal-living, astute business man who, with his wife and family, worked in his mill beside his employees, building for the future the firm of Crowther and Sons, of Bankdam Mills.

Ben Pickersgill was a weaver, the father of a dozen children. As a sickly creature of four years of age he had been brought to Yorkshire amongst hundreds of other pauper babies.

"In the mill, he with rows of other wizened tots, had slept miserably under coarse brown blankets and horse covers until before the dawn during the greater part of the year, the brats' overseer had clattered down the long, chill room, to rouse again to toil overstrained little bodies which often, so mercilessly driven, wilted and died before there had been an adequate return on the capital outlay." (page 48)

But Ben survived and we find him in his kitchen, where,

"Abysmal poverty cried aloud from everything in it, from cracked pottery to makeshifts of all kinds. Poor tattered rags of underwear hung from a line over the fireplace. A torn strip of rug, a pitiable ameliorative striving to give some warmth to the damp stone floor, served but as a danger to the unwary walker."

Out of child labour and the long hours of toil of the poverty-stricken workers, the early capitalists were enabled to amass wealth and accumulate. That is where the story of the Crowthers starts and it proceeds down the years from generation to generation. Trade slumps and booms, wars, tariffs, bankruptcies—all play their part in determining the vicissitudes of the Crowther family fortunes. By the end of the story the firm owns a number of huge woollen mills, various subsidiary works and factories and has offices and representatives in many parts of the world.

The story, in the main, centres on the capitalist family, not on the workers. It shows the sharp practice, the double-dealing and the downright fraud that capi-

talists use to exterminate one another, even friends and relatives, in the cut-throat competition born of capitalism.

Mr. Armstrong has also written a lengthy novel on the cotton industry called "King Cotton." We must confess, having had two bites at this book, we have given it up as indigestible. It fails to hold our interest, despite the loud acclaim of the critics when it was first published.

No matter what any of these authors claim for themselves, they are not Socialists. It has not been their task to find remedies for the evils that they have depicted or solutions for the problems that they have revealed. But in very entertaining form they have shown us the evils and brought us face to face with the problems! They have something to teach, we have much to learn.

W. WATERS.

SLINGS AND ARROWS

Time off for Apes!

So often is man's inhumanity commented upon by critics of the present social system, that it becomes a pleasure—if not a duty—to bring to our readers' attention an incident which will show that the milk of human kindness runs warm in the veins of one man and a great man at that!

We all know that during the late war the efforts of every politician and military leader were devoted to finding the quickest, most efficient and, of course, the cheapest method of killing the greatest number of people in the shortest space of time. The Germans developed flying bombs, rockets, and human incinerators. The Allies added atom bombs. During this destruction and loss of life appeared a light "no bigger than a man's hand," but nevertheless, still offering hope to suffering humanity. Who was the man who thus illuminated the world, who, while making wonderful speeches and organising battle-fronts where thousands lost their lives, still found time to perform an act of mercy? None other than Mr. Churchill.

The story about to be unfolded will touch the hearts and minds of our readers and if there is a dry eye left when this has been read, there must be harder hearts than we thought possible. On the Rock of Gibraltar depends, to some extent, the safe keeping of sea routes and strategic points for the British Commonwealth. Legend has it that if a certain species inhabiting the Rock were to become extinct, British ownership of Gibraltar would come to an end. In 1943, while Mr. Churchill was convalescing in Morocco after a severe illness, news was brought to him of a startling fall in the population of Gibraltar. In spite of his convalescence, Mr. Churchill was not disposed to view the matter with equanimity. In wartime falls of population were to be expected. But our gallant leader was not to be daunted. He went into action immediately. One can only imagine, for history has not yet recorded, the rolling prose, the fine sounding sentences, with which Mr. Churchill addressed himself to the problem. Within a short time and due to his exertions the situation was rapidly transformed, and readers will be relieved to learn that this species is now flourishing again on the Rock of Gibraltar, and Mr. Churchill is personally

informed of any "happy event" that occurs there.

It is good to know that our Mr. Churchill, bowed down, as he was, with cares of State, could take time off to save life—even if it was only that of monkeys!

Time off for Mourning

When King George VI passed away, and again on the recent death of Queen Mary, journalists, politicians and the like assured us that it would be in line with the wishes of Their Majesties for us to go on working as usual. It is true, however, that in the case of King George we were expected and, indeed, allowed to take two minutes off to stand in silence on the day of the funeral. We cannot complain. No employer likes giving time off and even though Kings and great men pass away life must go on. But all this takes place in capitalist Britain, and that is all one should reasonably expect.

In other lands, however, we are told that "Socialism" exists under a label marked "People's Democracy." In these lands things are vastly different, as they should be, since Socialism is not Capitalism. When a great man passes "over" in Russia or Czechoslovakia, the obsequies and public mourning are on a much vaster scale. The body of the departed "Father," or, if in a smaller "People's Democracy," "little father," is embalmed so that not only this, but succeeding generations may gaze upon and contemplate the glory that has departed. If in capitalist London the queue to see the lying-in-state stretches for two miles, in the "Land of Socialism" they stretch for ten. If in capitalist Britain the dead ruler is laid to rest and then almost forgotten, in Russia he is embalmed, canonised, and almost turned into a God. . . . But this is not all. In the "land of Socialism" poets compose odes of love and praise to the qualities of the dead man, while in Britain Mr. Pollitt tells us that our eyes are "dimmed with tears," and Mr. Campbell in the *Daily Worker*, rebukes the British Press for not observing the decencies expected when the great ones pass into the Great Beyond.

But of all the distinctions that mark off life here from life in the People's democracies, one stands out

most prominent of all. True that when Stalin and later Gottwald died, we were told that they would have wished the workers to go on working. And so far, it would appear to be no different from capitalist Britain. But, and here is the great distinction, in Moscow and in all the villages and towns of Russia and the "people's democracies" from East Germany to China and Mongolia, every worker was allowed to take time off for mourning to the tune of *five minutes*. How different from those greedy capitalists of the Western world, who only allowed us two minutes. It's almost worth emigrating for.

Profound thought dept.

"Raise level of honesty and we can smash crime, says Fyfe" (headline, *Evening Standard*, 14/3/53). Who would ever have thought of it? Such genius must obviously be preserved and applied in other spheres. For example, "Raise level of health and smash disease, says Health Minister"; "Raise level of bank balance and smash overdraft, says Bank Manager." The permutations are inexhaustible and no prizes are offered for any submitted to us.

"Enough, no more!"

Since the accession to the throne of Queen Elizabeth not a newspaper has been published without some mention of the Queen, her husband, her children and the rest of the Royal Family. Journalists have tripped over each other in their efforts to boost circulation by publishing highly-coloured stories of Royal doings. The articles are written in such obsequiously nauseating terms that one can only turn from them in disgust. No effort is spared to convince everybody that the Queen is the repository of every human virtue, that she smiles, is sad, has dignity and poise, and yet is modern and even advanced. We are told that this will be a new and glorious Elizabethan Era for Great Britain. Playwrights will become Shakespeares, musi-

cians Purcells, and adventurers Drakes or Raleighs.

It would appear, if these scribblers are to be believed, that the Queen has no faults whatsoever. We are not disposed to dispute that assertion. As we are not personally acquainted with Her Majesty we are unable to pass judgment. But now that this publicity is reaching its zenith with the approach of the Coronation, is it too much to ask that it should come to an end?

So that these Fleet Street hacks may be assured that their message has reached us all we hereby declare that we believe every word they tell us about the Royal Family, that we accept every tale of the indomitable courage with which Her Majesty faces her duties, and that we believe that under the inspiration of the Queen this country will become Glorious again. Having issued that declaration, we hope that these inane drivellings will cease and that journalists will now devote themselves to other and more serious matters, that is, provided always that they are capable of anything other than Society chit-chat.

Threat or Promise?

The *Sunday Pictorial* (5/4/53) tells us that American scientists are far advanced in experiments which, if successful, will enable men to live for ever. "What could this mean in everyday language?" asks the *Pictorial*, and proceeds to tell us. "It would mean that outstanding men like Winston Churchill and President Eisenhower could still be conducting affairs on either side of the Atlantic in the year A.D. 2953." Cripes!

Here at last is what we Socialists have been looking for. Here at last is the short cut to Socialism that we all want. War, poverty, hunger and all the other evils of capitalism do not constitute so telling an indictment as the threat that Eisenhower and Churchill might still be in control in a thousand years' time.

If mankind will not rouse themselves for their own sakes, surely they will hear the cry of generations yet unborn and establish Socialism before it is too late.

S. A.

ELECTIONS IN AUSTRIA

The Value of the Vote

PARLIAMENTARY Elections in any part of the world are ever watched with keen attention and invariably occupy much space in the press. This is understandable since with the world-wide interests and ramifications of capital, investors in every civilised country depend for the security of their holdings on stable governments and the continued acquiescence of the mass of the people in things as they are, i.e., wealth and a comfortable life without the necessity to work for a favoured few, and a life of poverty and insecurity for the mass of the workers not only at home but also abroad. In a class society such as ours, any upsetting of the government or any upheaval with the ever-present danger of the flouting of established authority by the poverty-stricken masses, strikes apprehension and fear into the hearts of property-holders; the cry goes up that "law and order" must be maintained at all costs. When, for example, Germany collapsed and Austria found herself without a government, the Viennese populace joined wherever they could the invading military forces in plundering to their hearts' content since there was nothing to stop them. Shops and warehouses were stripped bare—the sacred rights of property thrown to

the winds, forgotten for the time being, until a government and law and order had been re-established. The old staunch upholders of capitalism, with the late Dr. Renner at their head, assisted by the occupying Powers, saved the situation and the beloved fatherland for the exploiters, as they had done before at the end of World War I. Since then the Austrian statesmen have so thoroughly convinced the foreign investors of their capability of safeguarding their private interests that, but for the distrust of one occupying Power, the other three would probably long have withdrawn their troops.

The general election in February (consequent on the resignation of the coalition government after some discord between the Conservatives and the "Socialists") with the big and costly propaganda efforts made by a medley of parties, the specious promises of better times, the long lists of reforms dangled before the eyes of the people and dinned into their ears by the radio, bear witness to the concern of the propertied class and their State to get its subjects (mark the term "subjects") to vote for the peaceful continuation of their social

(Contd. on page 72, column 2)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

MAY,



1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

ELECTORAL ACTIVITY

AT the Party's recent Annual Conference it was decided that, in the event of a by-election in North Paddington, we should contest the constituency. A by-election in a constituency which we have previously contested affords us a splendid opportunity to conduct an all-out concentrated propaganda drive, and to bring the Party's case into greater prominence.

Such an effort does, of course, require money. Special literature, meeting halls, advertising, etc. are needed, and the initial outlay is much more than the Party has in hand at the moment.

If we are to make a success of such a campaign we must prepare for it NOW. We therefore appeal to every member and sympathiser to raise the necessary money. At the time of going to press it seems possible that we shall shortly have the chance of contesting a by-election at N. Paddington. So this is our immediate objective. Therefore we must have all the money we can get for the purpose immediately.

Please send us as much as you can for this purpose AT ONCE. We will announce in the June number the amount of money we have received and what we can do.

Send donations marked "Parliamentary Fund" to: E. Lake, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

GLASGOW MAY DAY RALLY

COSMO CINEMA

ROSE STREET, GLASGOW

"THE THREAT OF PEACE"

Speaker: C. MAY (London)

Chair: T. MULHERON

SUNDAY, MAY 3rd, 7 p.m. Admission Free

ELECTIONS IN AUSTRIA—continued from page 71

order which guaranteed them their privileges. The election over, great satisfaction was expressed by the press of what is now called the free world, over the return of a new government that, whatever its eventual composition, guarantees the continuance of the Trinity of rent, interest and profit in Austria.

While the Austrian electors were extravagantly thanked by the home press for their good sense, the foreign press, with the exception of that behind the iron curtain, joined in the great chorus of praise for the political wisdom and maturity shown by the people. If Socialists cannot join in this eulogising concert and sing-song of the Austrian workers' political ripeness, our reasons are, of course, very different from those prompting the attitude behind the iron curtain and their local agents regarding the Austrian elections. Unlike Socialists, the Russians are not concerned with the workers' understanding or lack of class-consciousness; all they are concerned with is commercial interest, to maintain the strategic position and control of the rich provinces which they have attained as a result of the war. And this is where they fall out with the other thieves.

It is true that Austrian workers have often fought and suffered for the democratic ideal, i.e., at least for freedom of organisation and association, free discussion, freedom of the press, etc. Who has forgotten the Austrian workers' tragic heroism in 1934? (see *SOCIALIST STANDARD* for March, 1934). But, with all, can one say that the workers of Austria are politically enlightened and mature any more than the mass of the workers in other lands? The answer must, unfortunately, be no. The fact alone that the numerically huge S.D.P. collapsed like a house of cards at the outbreak of World War I, and again even in times of peace, in 1934, at the hands of a mediocre clique led by a political dwarf like Dollfuss, proves their political backwardness. One can reasonably agree with the Austrian S.P. member who wistfully said to this writer at the time of the 1934 defeat: "If only 10 per cent. of our members had understood and been imbued with the democratic and Socialist ideal, we would have had more fighters than we needed to crush the Schuschnigg-Dollfuss gang." To which one might add that, if there had been 10 per cent. class-conscious workers in the party, such a clique of usurpers could never even have raised its ugly head, and the working-class would have been spared the awful sacrifice and punishment that was inflicted upon it.

Political maturity! What with all the past promises of better times remaining unfulfilled, with the promise of full employment having turned out to be mass unemployment, and yet the people continuing to vote for the bankrupt upholders of a social order that produces all the misery and conflicts—one may well ask: Where does the political enlightenment and maturity come in? Were it not so tragically serious, one might consider it a joke. Why, a ripe and alert working class would surely not waste their time and energy listening to the worn-out platitudes and piffle of capitalist politicians and being taken in by their cliché programmes, which invariably include, of course, a "fight for the country's freedom and independence," "securing its economic future," increased production," "social justice," "peace, the rights of man," and so on, ad nauseam.

With some 300,000 men and women on the dole in a country of only about 6 million people, and with the problem of the unemployed youth, which will add another quarter-million to those seeking work, and knowing, on the other hand, as people must by now, the utter impotence of the existing political parties to effect any improvement in this dreary picture and appalling outlook, a people politically ripe and understanding the Socialist message, would consider that the time had come for revolutionary political action to end the sorry farce of capitalism instead of keeping on supporting and inflicting it on their children. As it is, however, about half of the electors were probably quite at a loss to know how to vote, since there is nowadays hardly any difference between the various political set-ups.

Even the much-vaunted improvements in housing conditions must be viewed against the background of the dreary picture of the general position of the workers. Does anyone imagine that there is happiness and a sense of security behind the facades of these huge blocks of council houses? Gone is the time of the low rents; the screw has been put on, and anybody thinking that the "red city administration" and their banks, who control this property like everything else, have softer hearts than other capitalist overlords, is woefully mistaken. Even when in work, the tenants have to fight their life long to keep the wolf from the door, but woe betide when the breadwinner falls on evil days and becomes even less able to face the bills for gas and electricity and the rent collector! He will then discover how much of all this "public property" belongs to him.

Political maturity! Only those are mature who have realised that the present social order has come to a hopeless impasse and that all attempts by the existing poli-

tical parties and their spokesmen and statesmen to improve conditions, or avoid the terrible conflicts engendered by and raging within the framework of that competitive system, are doomed to failure; only those who have realised that what is needed is a fundamental change in the constitution of present-day society, as advocated by the S.P.G.B., their companion parties and by the great pioneers of scientific Socialism, Marx and Engels; only those who have the will and who will work for that fundamental change; only such people can lay claim to political maturity. All else is quackery and confusion and illusion.

Until the people have succeeded in overthrowing the present grotesquely stupid and inhuman social order, the mass of the people will remain what they are—heirs to the slavery of ages, exposed to all the evils and vicissitudes of a system based on property and production for profit. It is the height of folly on the part of the working class to continue placing their trust in mealy-mouthed professional politicians and glib-tongued "personalities," and to fall again and again for their propaganda, despite all past disillusion and these leaders' glaring failure everywhere to deliver the goods. With the technical achievements and mass production that the last 100 years have brought to mankind, the social adjustment to this technical development, i.e. the fundamental change in the constitution of society as taught and advocated by scientific socialism, is now the only thing that matters. That teaching is that the means and instruments of wealth production and distribution must be converted from private and state control to the common property of the whole people, if poverty, insecurity, class-conflict and war is to be effaced from the face of the earth. It's as simple as that.

R.

HUMAN NATURE AND SOCIALISM

I—Introduction

IN this and five succeeding articles we shall outline the socialist view of the human aspect of society. In doing so we hope to make it clear why we believe that a new form of society, more in harmony with human needs and desires, is within the bounds of possible achievement. We may also be able to dispel some of the prejudices that exist concerning the aim of the socialist movement.

It is no exaggeration to say that most objections to Socialism are basically forms of asserting "it's against human nature." We do not underestimate the difficulties of overcoming the comforting feeling that the present system, despite its shortcomings, is "natural" and incapable of being fundamentally changed. The real defence of capitalism consists in perpetuating the myth (which need not be explicit to have its effect) that no other system is possible.

To the casual observer it seems strange that such great strides should have been made by science in the non-human or material side of nature and so few in the essentially human side. The explanation of this is to be found in the fact that the motor of history within private property society has been the development of the means of production. Under the stimulus of the need to increase productivity in order to compete suc-

cessfully with rivals, capitalists have spent much money on research into all branches of science that aid this. Small wonder that the sciences of society—sociology, history, anthropology, etc.—have shown such meagre advances in comparison. Other fields of study, e.g. psychology and ethics, hardly rank as sciences because they have remained chained to idealism and religion.

We must not, however, underestimate the changes that are being brought about in the climate of ideas. The declining power of religion and the scientific (if not political) death of the dogmas of racism are evidence that man's knowledge of himself in society is growing rapidly. Old prejudices and false ideas are being swept away because they do not fit into the pattern of knowledge generated by the complex society in which we live.

Every Individual Counts

The essence of the socialist case is that man can have the sort of world that will solve his present problems, by accepting the ideas necessary to bring it into being and to sustain it. But it is not merely a question of getting a majority of people to say—"Yes, Socialism is a good idea—let's have it." With the changing of the ideas that predominate now must come a changing of the ways in which people are accustomed to look at every aspect of life.

So long as people believe that as things are so they have always been, they will not be in a position to take the requisite action to change them to achieve desired ends. They may agree with us when we point out the need for change, but will excuse themselves from taking any action by making some such remark as "it's a good idea, but it will never come in my lifetime so what's the use?"

The reduction of the worker to the status of a cog in a vast machine helps to foster the feeling that the views of one individual make no difference to the total, and therefore no difference to what is "bound" to happen. Yet those who, at election times, seek support for the continuation of capitalism do not take this view—they stress that **every vote counts**, which, of course, it does. They know that there is nothing inevitable about the electorate choosing one of the parties of capitalism. It is only when trying to combat the case for Socialism that they seek to deny the effect of individual views.

We are concerned not merely with explaining Socialism but also with overcoming all the factors that hinder the growth of socialist ideas. Not the least of these is the false concept of his own nature that man has built up within property society. From time to time he has believed himself to be the plaything of the gods, the victim of a predestined fate, or the product of a mathematical mind behind the universe. All such views have had the effect (usually, but not necessarily, intended) of making him resigned to his lot, and of turning him away from any constructive action to change it. "It's human nature" has been more often used in extenuation of the avoidable ills, malpractices, injustices and cruelties of men than any other phrase in the language.

Meaning of Human Nature

There is probably no more misused and misunderstood term in the language than 'human nature.' Everyone has used it, but few have understood it. In order to clear away some of the confusion, let us refer to the Shorter Oxford Dictionary, which takes over 500 words to define 'nature.' In connection with 'human' it gives:

The general inherent character or disposition of mankind.

More fully human nature.

e.g. Modern. It's only human nature to do that.

The compilers of the dictionary must be congratulated upon choosing an example that illustrates well the looseness and vagueness of the term. They might have chosen a commoner example, such as 'it's only human nature to be selfish'—but then they would have been in the position of saying that selfishness is the general inherent character of mankind. Caution is indicated to all who would enlarge upon what it is 'human nature' to do.

We are, however, safe in saying that human nature is the nature (as defined above) of human beings. That being so, it must obviously only apply (even with the qualifying adjective 'general') to the vast mass of all human beings. It is not the nature of all Britons, or of all the people in the world at present, that is under discussion, but what is common to the natures of human beings, as a species, since they first inhabited the earth. Since this is generally agreed to have been anything between 50,000 and 500,000 years ago, care must be

taken lest a character is wrongly attributed to human nature. Love of money, for example, could only have arisen when money did (about 5,000 years ago) and is therefore not "natural" to human beings.

"Human nature" only applies to those characters which all human beings share. It is reasonable to include among these such universal needs as shelter, clothing, work, play, companionship and love. Human life can exist, at least for a time, without these things, but they may be regarded for all practical purposes, as universal and basic.

But the term "human nature" is seldom applied in this way. When used correctly, it usually supports some other statement that is fully capable of standing on its own merits, such as "he needs to be loved—it's only human nature." Only when an attempt is being made to **prove** a doubtful assertion is it extended beyond its true meaning. Take the example quoted earlier, "it's only human nature to be selfish." If it is possible to show that any significant number of men have **not** been selfish, then "human nature" is not applicable. Some other phrase, such as "human behaviour," must be used to indicate that selfishness is the attribute of only **some** men under certain conditions.

Heredity and Environment

We must now introduce a concept that is of the greatest importance to an understanding of the socialist view of human nature. It concerns the parts that heredity and environment play in human evolution.

The first thing to recognise is that man's bodily structure has had little to do with his progress. For all practical purposes, modern men have the same physiological organs as the earliest men. But the **products** of human evolution—ideas, theories, social organisations and the like—**do** change, and are, in effect, what distinguish men of one period of history from those of another.

Physical characteristics, such as colour of eyes, skin and shape of head are inherited through the genes, according to certain reasonably well-defined laws, the details of which need not concern us here. But the characteristics which count in the field of human endeavour are not, and cannot be transmitted by physiological reproduction. Each individual must acquire them anew from the human environment in which he is born and develops. Ideas, ways of thinking, habits, motives—in short, the psychological features as distinct from the anatomical—are given to the individual by all the influences of the human world, by the state of society in which his development proceeds.

"Humanity, as a whole, is the only organism which transmits the products of human evolution. A man does not derive them from his parents; they contribute almost nothing in that respect. Every man is born a wild little animal, susceptible of developing into a howling savage, a man of the fifth century, of the fifteenth century, of the twentieth or of the twenty-fifth. It is the vast organism, the human world, which makes him what he is, and determines to what stage of human evolution he shall belong." ("The Making of Humanity," by Robert Briffault, p. 64.)

From this, it follows that there is nothing in the biological make-up of man that makes one system of society possible and another impossible. What determines this is the **behaviour** of people, which is the product of all the environmental influences.

○ Social anthropologists point out that had any one of us been reared among Hottentots his behaviour would be that of a Hottentot. And if we were to be trans-

ferred, even as adults, to a social culture radically different from the one in which we grew up, our behaviour would, in time, begin to resemble that of the people in the new surroundings more so than our former

habits. It is only because we remain in the environment in which our habits originally arose that our behaviour stays fairly constant.

S. R. P.

(Next Article: "You Can't Change Human Nature")

ENGELS ON THE RELATIONSHIP OF LANDLORD AND TENANT

A CORRESPONDENT, Mr. C. E. Berry, Torquay, draws our attention to a statement made by Frederick Engels in his "The Housing Question."

Mr. Berry writes:—

"It appears that a landlord confronted by a tenant is not, *per se* a capitalist nor engaged in exaction of surplus value."

Mr. Berry refers to the mention of "land" in our Declaration of Principles and asks:—

"Does this mean that ownership of houses apart from land, such as leaseholds, is not contrary to Socialism? Where does common ownership of property divide off from property in personal ownership, i.e. personal property, under Socialism?"

Reply

1. The relationship of landlord and tenant

The passage referred to is one in which Engels criticises the statement of a German follower of Proudhon who had written:—

"As the wage worker is in relation to the capitalist, so is the tenant in relation to the house owner."

Engels points out that the above statement is incorrect. People who rent houses (whether they are workers or capitalists) are buying a commodity (the use of a house) from the house-owner. They are not in the position of worker to capitalist, for in this relationship the worker is the seller of a commodity (labour-power) and the capitalist is buying it.

The capitalist exacts surplus value when he buys labour-power. He does not exact surplus value when he sells commodities, though it is in the act of selling commodities that he realises surplus value. If the Proudhonist argument were correct then all sales, not only sales of accommodation, would be an act of exacting surplus value—which would produce the odd result that the capitalists exploit each other, and also that the

workers are exploited in production and everybody, capitalists and workers alike, is again exploited in the act of buying commodities.

2. That the landlord is not *per se* a capitalist

Our correspondent's conclusion from Engel's statement is that "a landlord confronted by a tenant is not, *per se*, a capitalist."

This overlooks the fact that the capitalist is still a capitalist after he has exploited the workers in production; he is still a capitalist when, as a seller of commodities, he confronts workers or other capitalists—but in the latter act he is a capitalist who is realising surplus value by turning commodities into money.

3. Landlords and Socialism

Our correspondent's further conclusion is in the form of asking whether the ownership of houses is compatible with Socialism.

Socialism requires that the means of production and distribution shall cease to be privately owned and become the common property of society. This relates to the means of production and distribution and the consequence of their common ownership will be that the products will be freely accessible to the members of society.

In those circumstances the members of society will take the products in order to consume them. They will consume the accommodation by living in houses and will of course not do so by permission of an individual house owner any more than they will eat bread by permission of a bread owner. There will be no such owners.

Nothing that Engels wrote in "The Housing Question" is in conflict with this. Engels was merely correcting an erroneous statement. He did not draw or imply any conclusion such as these in the question.

ED. COMM.

Mr. ALDRED INTERVENES

THE February issue of "The Word" published in Glasgow by Mr. Guy A. Aldred and enigmatically describing itself as "organ of the United Socialist Movement," contains two articles attacking the S.P.G.B. The one with which we are concerned here contains letters sent to us by H. Fullarton and John Robertson which were not published by us. In publishing them Aldred claims that he is "rendering a service to the Socialist Movement."

The facts are as follows. In the October, 1951 issue of the Socialist Standard we published and replied to a letter from John Robertson under the heading "Organisation—Industrial or Political." A second letter from John Robertson was published and replied to in March, 1952 and a third letter in June, 1952.

We then received a fourth letter from him, also a letter from H. Fullarton and a letter from W. T. Fielding all dealing with the same controversy.

As these three further letters largely went over again the ground that had already been covered and as our

space is limited we decided to have an article drafted dealing with all three together and the correspondence was handed over to a member who was to draft the reply. For various reasons the reply was not written and eventually the whole matter was forgotten. For this we express our regrets to the three correspondents.

Readers who are interested in the discussion can see the opposing points of view in the issues referred to.

We are still of opinion that the unpublished letters are largely a repetition of what went before, and after this lapse of time there is no point in pursuing the matter.

We note that in his fourth letter John Robertson holds that our reply to his third letter misrepresents what he wrote. Readers can see his letter and our reply in the issue for June, 1952.

We also observe that though Mr. Aldred says that he thinks he is rendering a service by publishing two of the letters he does not reproduce any of the earlier letters or our replies to them.

ED. COMM.

DURING THE EAST COAST FLOODS

When Socialists outline the society that could be established with the present productive equipment, non-socialists argue that it wouldn't work. They say it would be against human nature, that men are by nature lazy and greedy and won't work unless they are forced on with the whip or incited by some economic advantage.

The *Observer* in an editorial refuted those arguments.

The *Observer* wrote:—

"When the floods broke, people showed exactly the virtues and the spirit needed in a modern industrial society. Machines and materials had to be moved quickly to the coast, and so had a labour force of many thousands. There had to be a service of engineers and technicians, and a system of administrative control. Everything was done in a hurry; there was a good deal of excited confusion and some ill-directed endeavour. But the total organisation worked well, mainly because so many people worked willingly and in relative harmony.

"The motive force was enthusiasm, sweeping away the inhibitions and protective restrictions which persist in many of our industries. Engineers on the flooded coast were sometimes embarrassed by lorry-drivers who, foregoing all their rest-periods along the road, arrived with thousands of sandbags in the middle of the night. One of the gangs working with fortitude and persistence, under conditions of unrelieved hardship, did so almost within sight of a building site where not long ago thousands of men struck work partly because they were denied a tea-break. And on the professional and administrative sides, many people hitherto rutted deep in the easy routine of their lives gave themselves up to days and nights of revolutionary discomfort.

"Moreover, once the tragic side of the disaster had receded, people scarcely bothered to disguise the fact that they were enjoying themselves. They seemed to welcome the chance to work without sparing themselves, in co-operation with others, and for the good of an obviously stricken community." (April 5th, 1953.)

The *Observer* compared the zeal shown by the workers during the East Coast floods with that shown in ordinary everyday work and implied that if the workers worked with the same zeal in their everyday jobs as they did during the floods British capitalism could be extricated from its difficulties.

But, of course, the *Observer* realised that there are "differences between an emergency of this kind and the routine of ordinary working life. Nobody on the

East Coast was afraid of working too hard or of working himself out of a job; the effort required was intense, but everyone knew it was not going to last long. Nobody was worried by the thought that he was working to make profits for someone else."

In their ordinary everyday life the workers sell their labour power to the capitalist class who own the means and instruments of production. The wages they receive in return are very often not enough to live on. What the workers produce over their wages enables the capitalist class to live in luxury and idleness and increase their investments, and is the primary purpose of capitalist production. To increase their profits the capitalist class use every device; they instal labour-saving machinery, appeal to social feelings and national prejudices to get as much work as possible from the workers at as low a wage as possible. To improve their standard of living, even maintain it, the workers must struggle continually. Between the working class and the capitalist class there is a fundamental conflict of interest.

To sell their goods the different sections of the capitalist class come into conflict over markets. They also come into conflict over sources of raw materials and strategic points controlling trade routes.

The non-Socialists who argue that men must be "forced" to work should take note of the following words from the *Observer* although they are coloured by an appeal to patriotic sentiments:—

"The experience of the floods has shown that the country has not lost its energy, its co-operative impulses or its adventurous spirit. The problem is to harness these forces to the everyday jobs."

These forces can be harnessed to everyday jobs by abolishing the private ownership of the means of production—the source of the conflict of interest in modern industrial society—and establishing the common property of the means of living. Then there would be a community of interest: the many would not work in the interest of the few; everyone would be working for the benefit of all—as during the floods—for the benefit of humanity.

J. T.

THE FLOODS — ANOTHER SOLUTION

It is claimed by Anarchists and Anarch-Syndicalists that they are revolutionaries not reformists; that they are opposed to the various politicians' schemes for patching up the present social system. A recent editorial of *The Syndicalist* (February, 1953), however, shows that this is not so.

Under the title "A Floodworkers' Scheme," *The Syndicalist* deals with the condition of the sea walls and dykes around the British Coast. "It is a disgrace," says the writer, "that the people of Canvey Island should have been relying for their safety on dykes built by Dutchmen two hundred years ago, and that elsewhere clay walls built in the time of Henry VIII were relied upon to keep back the relentless sea." After castigating the authorities for not having tackled the task of strengthening the sea defences before, and merely waiting for disaster and then bringing in the Army, *The Syndicalist* puts forward its own "revolutionary" solu-

tion. "What is needed is a national scheme for flood and tempest." And, continues our Anarchist writer:—

"The country can afford to keep a few old men as watchmen for such a job . . . and the possibility of lookout posts, with sirens, on a job modelled on that of the lighthouse-keeper is something that will at the very least help out a few pensioners while remaining a surety for warning if not for safety.

"A flood labour scheme could continue throughout the year, but particularly employing unskilled labour in slacker periods of the year. That there is vast pool of foreign labour which would be only too anxious to come over and participate in such a scheme is undisputable. But a national scheme is required, and proper rates should be paid, for it is impossible to conceive that Army and volunteer help such as at present exists in the flood areas can continue indefinitely."

Need we comment on this Anarch-Syndicalist "solution?"

PETER E. NEWELL.

PIECE WORK, BONUS AND THE PSYCHOLOGIST

THE problem of how to get more out of the working class has been one which has perplexed capitalist society ever since its inception. The field over which discussion on this subject has ranged has been an unlimited one. Defenders of private property, the Church, the Press, the politician and the professor, indeed most of the stout hearted apologists for Capitalism in its various forms, have all had something to say on the matter. More recently this field has been invaded by the Trade Union leaders and at the moment of writing Mr. A. Horner (Communist) is joining together with Sir William Lawther, a labourite, and Sir Herbert Holdsworth of the National Coal Board, in an appeal to the miners to increase output.

One of the plots that is so often hatched to force us to work harder is piece work or a bonus scheme in some form or another.

The older established forms of piece work are well known. The idea of paying an employee a certain rate for a piece of work turned out has long been established in certain industries and workers have learnt from bitter experience how the system is operated by the employers. Often just when they seem to be gaining a little, the employer declares it to be "uneconomical" and alters the rate for the job. Of course, the results are often quite beneficial to the capitalist. The *Daily Herald* of 9th November, 1950, reported that workers on piece-work in the women's shoe industry produced double the output of those on day wages, although the earnings of the piece workers were only just over £2 per week more.

Another variation of the same theme is to introduce an incentive bonus which is paid in addition to the weekly or hourly rates. During and since the war this has become a popular method of avoiding large wage increases, particularly in the building and civil engineering industries.

A report appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* of February 23rd, 1953, headed "Failings of the Group Bonus Scheme" dealing with some research into this subject carried out by a Dr. Norah M. Davis of the Medical Research Councils' Group in Industrial Psychology.

The function of "psychologists" in general has always been something of a puzzle to the writer but an "industrial psychologist" is a bird somewhat easier to define. In general their object seems to be to try and iron out the mental difficulties of the workers in order to make them more contented in their work. Indeed, throughout her report Dr. Davis seems to refer to "the workers" in a similar manner to that of the biologist dealing with the life and habits of some lower species of animals.

The report states "Over 60% felt a sense of injustice which expressed itself either in aggression or resigned helplessness. This was because the bonus they received each week varies in an unpredictable manner. Although pay was related to work done, the relationship was so complicated that no one understood it and working harder in fact seemed to make no difference to money at the end of the week."

To the socialist this is by no means an amazing

revelation and one wonders why capitalists have to call on their "industrial psychologists" to tell them this. It is a fact that most of us have this feeling at the end of a week's work, with or without a group bonus scheme. The reason for it has nothing to do with "psychology" but arises directly from the fact that, under capitalism, the wealth we produce belongs to the ruling class. The attitudes of "resigned helplessness" or "aggression" are but the reflection of the very real grievances of the workers. Dr. Davis has a very difficult task ahead of her if she and her fellow "industrial psychologists" hope to create the illusion in the minds of the workers that their sole object should be to work harder and co-operate more together in the interests of the capitalists.

The report does well to mention the "social disunity" of the group bonus scheme, the conflict it created within the group and states that some workers thought it "evil" and that it produced "tragic results." Those of us who have experienced this sort of scheme at work will know what it is to see one worker against another, the more "diligent" member of the group acting as a sort of unpaid foreman, chasing his fellow workers and blaming them for every fall in his earnings. This must make the employers very happy and no doubt they would be even happier if only the workers would take up the right "psychological attitude."

Dr. Davis notices some further tragic results of the system when she mentions the question of the nervous exhaustion and strain felt by the people working in the factories she visited. One departmental manager said, for example, that his men were "extraordinarily difficult to handle, touchy and liable to flare up over any trifle."

This is capitalism at its modern stage of development, the age of speed, the race for greater and greater production and the struggle for world markets. The roundabout goes faster and ever faster, the more speedy the worker and the more concentrated his work, the greater is production bringing with it ever mounting riches for a privileged minority. As for the workers, they are but the losers of the race, the tragic, fallen victims, nervous and neurotic, of an age of racing production and rocketing profits.

To these problems the "industrial psychologist" has no answer. True Dr. Davis tells us that doctors and personnel managers as well as the management and the "time-study" engineer should be called in to settle the "payment systems." But we rest assured, that whoever is called in to settle how much wages the workers should receive they will get no more than is necessary to keep them alive and able to work.

The problems dealt with by Dr. Davis have very little to do with that which is called "psychology" but arise from the social conditions of the modern world. Harmonious relationships within industry cannot be created within the framework of capitalism. It may be possible to foster the illusion in the minds of the workers that greater productivity under this system is in their interests, but it will be an illusion that will be finally shattered by the ever-pressing problems of the capitalist world.

D. M.

SIDELIGHT ON THE U.S.A.

THE American Magazine "Time" of February 23rd, 1953, paints a revealing picture of the mercenary struggle that goes on behind the scenes when the big record companies of the United States decide that they have a vocal "hit" personality. "Time" spotlights Rosemary Clooney the latest best seller of the revolving disc and tells us that the reason for her success is because to the trade "her voice is both 'barrel house' and blue, i.e., robust and fresh with an undercurrent of seductiveness . . . it has a cinnamon flavour that tends to remind fans of happier days gone by—or soon to come." "Time" continues "Moreover thanks to a malocclusion of the Clooney jaw her voice carries just the hint of a lisp. A word like 'kiss' comes out 'kish' and 'caress' like 'carest' . . . Clooney gets a sound that no other competitor quite duplicates."

We are then told of one Mitch Miller who chooses the songs for Columbia records, who employs both himself and Rosemary Clooney. In four or five hours he may listen to as many as fifty songs any of which will possibly be sung by one or more of Columbia's best selling warblers. Keeping in mind the age group 14—22 years that buys most of these records Mr. Miller has an infallible formula "Keep it simple, keep it sexy, keep it sad." Whilst giving auditions to these new ballads that are soon to rend the hearts and moisten the eyes of American and British youth, Mr. Miller will pass the time "spooning yoghurt or munching hard boiled eggs."

And what does all this add up to for Miss Clooney the girl with the malocclusion (whatever that may mean) of the jaw? "Time" tells us "a jungly world of high

pressure pluggers struggling songsmiths and all important disc jockeys. It was a world where she came to own only 75 per cent. of herself with her managers and booking agents owning the other 25 per cent. Above all it was a world where click or smash hit was the ultimate goal where clearance (by payment to publishing societies) was necessary for permission to plug a song on the air; a world where cut-ins (giving a performer a share of song profits), hot stones (open bribes), and other forms of payola were standing operating procedure; a world of concern . . . of romance (a verb meaning to shower disc jockeys and musicians with attention in return for performances," and now apparently she is on her way to Hollywood and stardom.

While one may not wish the young woman of our story anything but good (it is not often that members of the working class get such quick and relatively easy money) we would venture to suggest that within a socialist society people will be much more able and much freer to create their own music alongside and in harmony with their other activities and to be able to appreciate a better standard from those who can excel. This of course does not mean the howlers, echo box and crying performers that seem to be necessary to give youth a shot in the arm today. It would also mean an end to the parasites who, like leeches fasten on to any new success as long as they can take a cut or a rake off.

Incidentally Columbia with six other recording companies shared 100,000,000 dollars worth of business last year and business is still booming.

S.E.K.

THE LITTLE WORLD OF DON CAMILLO

THOSE who enjoy a good story with plenty of action and first class acting should be sure to see this film which has now been generally released.

The film is made in Italy where Don Camillo (played by Fernandel) is a parish priest in a village with a Communist Party dominated local council. He is not averse from fisticuffs on occasions, in fact sometimes he is simply itching for a scrap when the communists become particularly trying to him. This character is loved by the local Catholics and commands the respect of the communists. Although as a priest he is officially out of politics he really makes no secret of his antagonism to the local Communist politicians, even though both groups co-operated in the underground movement directed against the German occupation of Italy in the last war.

The Communist mayor (portrayed by Gino Cervi) controls his supporters with paternal despotism.

The really outstanding feature of the film, apart from the first class acting, lies in its thread of humour arising from the underlying background of religious

belief of many of the communists which sometimes comes to light at times embarrassing for the Mayor. These communists apparently want the best of both worlds—sometimes they are shewn as enjoying material advantages gained as a result of their support of the Communist Party and in taking part in a communist organised strike for higher pay. Sometimes they are glad of the comforts of the Catholic Church—at times that they considered important, such as baptisms, marriage and death; as for instance when the Mayor insisted on the baptism of his son by Don Camillo and also when the communist agricultural strikers as surreptitiously as possible, followed the bidding of the priest and went back to work.

The popularity of the film in Italy and France indicates that the idea of Catholics and Communists having a similar mentality and a similar basically religious attitude towards life does not strike a jarring note in the minds of the viewers in those countries.

This is particularly interesting because Italy is the fountainhead of the world Catholic Church and at the

PUBLIC MEETING

"The Standard of Living: Past, Present and Future"

Speaker: H. YOUNG

8 p.m. WEDNESDAY, 20th MAY, 1953

Islington Central Library, Holloway Rd., N.7

(3 mins. from Highbury and Holloway Tube Stations)

Questions and Discussion Welcome - Admission Free

PADDINGTON BRANCH

is holding a

Social and Dance

on Saturday, May 9th

from 7 - 11 p.m.

at the

PRINCE OF WALES HOTEL

1 BISHOPSBRIDGE ROAD, W.2.

Running Buffet and Bar

Tickets 2/6

Buses 7, 7a, 15, 27, 36, 36a pass door.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN MAY

Mondays: Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.

Fridays: Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.
White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11 a.m.
East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

F. OFFORD.

SUNDAY EVENING MEETINGS

AT HEAD OFFICE

52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4., at 7 p.m.

Sunday May 10th World Wide Hunger, -Why?

—J. McGregor

" " 17th The Chemical Revolution—C. Kilner

" " 24th The Chinese Revolution—F. Offord

" " 31st Wat Tyler and the Feudal System

—V. Phillips

1953 SUMMER SCHOOL

A week-end school will be held at Treetops Holiday Camp, Farley Green, near Guildford on Saturday and Sunday, June 20th and 21st.

Total charge including accommodation £1. Will all who wish to attend please write to J. Darcy at S.P.G.B., 52 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

TO MEMBERS AND SYMPATHISERS

Will members and sympathisers interested in the formation of a branch of the Party in the Hammersmith district please communicate with B. Flitter, 17 Chiswick Village, W.4.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month at 7.15 p.m., at Kingsley Hall, Old Market Street, Bristol. Secretary: J. Flowers, 8, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 6th and 20th May, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Group meets 2nd and 4th Wednesday in each month at Co-op Club, "Oakfield", Bilton Road., at 7.30 p.m. Correspondence to C. Walsh, 57 Bridget Street, Rugby.

SWANSEA.—D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmer's Green. Branch meets Thursdays 7.30 p.m. Sirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hallard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.15.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Peter's London Road, Wickford. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at Digbeth Institute. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. First and third Thursdays in May (7th and 21st), Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., E. M. P. Hirst, 35, Addington Square, S.E.5.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 35, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. **Fulham** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulheron, 366, Alkenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, April 6th and 20th at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to A. Iremey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to Secretary, 22, Sanderstead Avenue, N.W.2.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. D. Courtney, 53 Canonbury Park South, N.1.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 446, Staines Road, Twickenham. Branch meets Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at the above address. Tel. Feltham 4006.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets Tuesdays, 12th and 26th May, at 7.45 p.m., Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate. Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 586 Vol. 49 June, 1953

OF KINGS AND QUEENS

HUMAN NATURE AND SOCIALISM

SLINGS AND ARROWS

ABOUT BOOKS

CHURCHILL'S DAMP SQUIB

THE PASSING SHOW

MUTUAL AID IN ADVERSITY

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

Pomp, Pageantry and Privilege

THE CORONATION ON JUNE 2nd of a young woman by the name of Elizabeth Alexandra Mary of Windsor, as Queen of Great Britain and the British Commonwealth of Nations, is an event which, it is safe to say, has received more publicity and been the subject of more propaganda than any other peace-time occurrence of the last fifty years. Since the death of her father, the Queen has been publicised to such an extent that there can hardly be a literate person in the whole world who is not aware of the forthcoming event.

For the first time millions of people will, as it were, be inside the Abbey witnessing the ceremonial, the religious service, and the rest of the mumbo jumbo with which a Monarch is crowned. They will be there by virtue of Television, and wireless which will relate every detail of the ritual. Every organ of propaganda has been geared to the event; schools, Churches, newspapers have given it every attention all with the design to make us feel that we are part of the coronation and that we shall all be the better for it.

There can be no doubt that the organisation will prove itself efficient. The collection of notabilities from every corner of the world; the display of heraldic symbols; the presence of dignitaries with such titles as Gold Stick, Bluemantle, and Rouge Dragon will provide a magnificent spectacle beside which the productions of Hollywood will pale into insignificance. We may be sure that the belted Earls, the Dukes and Marquesses, the Society ladies, the Dowagers, the Duchesses and so forth will appear dressed in their full regalia, their diamonds sparkling, and their coronets adding lustre to the occasion.

But when the cheering has died away; when the inevitable dustcarts which follow coronations as well as Lord Mayor's Shows appear to clear the debris; when the "captains and the kings" have departed, what will remain? When the sightseers stands have been demolished; when the red carpets have been taken up; when the diadems and the crowns and the rest of the regalia have been returned for safe keeping to the Tower of London, what then?

If the historians and publicists, the journalists and broadcasters are to be believed, Coronation day is to usher in a new period of glory and prosperity for this country. They assure us that whenever a Queen has ruled this land it has flowed with milk and honey, and its influence spread over all the earth. They cite the days of Queen Elizabeth and Queen Victoria as evidence for their claims, yet even the most superficial examination of those two periods will show that they are either ignorant fools or deliberate liars who by

promising us the fictional glories of the past, hope to blind us to the grim, sordid realities of the present.

The Elizabethan Era

What are these glories of the first Elizabethan age? It is true that then was laid the foundations of the British Empire and British mastery of the seas. It is true that British merchantmen sailed all over the world trading goods and bringing back to these shores unimaginable wealth. Colonies were established in America; pirates, cutthroats and swashbucklers flourished, prospered and were honoured by the Virgin Queen. Those not brave enough to fight the Spaniards indulged in trading in the human flesh of the African coast. Many fortunes were made in those days and it is interesting to note that some of the congregation at Westminster Abbey are there because their ancestors in the days of Queen Elizabeth were successful freebooters. But while all these things are true and while the rich and ruthless became ever more wealthy, the majority of the people of England had no share in that prosperity. For them there was work and poverty and starvation. For them the privilege of fighting to preserve the wealth of their Feudal Lords. (Strange how history repeats itself!) All the viciousness of the Elizabethan era is now glossed over with a tawdry coating of journalistic paint. But a writer of the period shows in a few words the hollowness of the claim that England as a whole was prosperous in the days of Queen Elizabeth:—

"The poor lie in the street upon pallets of straw, and well if they have that too, or else in the mire and dirt as commonly it is seen, having neither house to put in their heads, covering to keep them from cold, nor yet to hide their shame withal, penny to buy them sustenance, nor anything else, but are suffered to die in the streets like dogs or beasts, without any mercy or shame showed to them at all.

"Truly, brother, if I had not seen it, I would scarcely credit that the like Turkish cruelty had been used in all the world." (Philip Stubbs; *The Anatomie of Abuses*).

The truth is that in all ages and at all times in written history, prosperity has always been for the rich, never for the labourers, the "hewers of wood and drawers of water."

The Victorian Era

If we have demolished, as is the case, the claims made about the days of Good Queen Bess, what of the age of Victoria? The Industrial Revolution had already taken place. Railways had been introduced and England had become the workshop of the world. No other country could compete in the manufacture of goods, and the world's markets were the preserve of British industrialists. Huge fortunes were built up and their possessors bought themselves titles forming a new aristocracy to replace the fast-dying old. At such a time then, surely the poor and oppressed were better off? Work there was in plenty for they were forced to toil sixteen and eighteen hours a day. Surely, therefore, the workers were amply rewarded for their toil? Nothing could be further from the truth.

Men, women and children slaved in the factories, their pay a miserable pittance, their homes hovels, their food cheap and adulterated. Epidemics, when they came, killed them off like flies. The child labourers became stunted and old before their time.

There was no lack of priest or Bishop to condone this cruelty in the name of God. They praised the manufacturers for keeping children at work so that evil thoughts would not invade their otherwise idle hours.

During the reign of Queen Victoria, India became the "most precious jewel in the Imperial crown"; the Suez Canal came under British control, and yet a poet of that time could still write of Child Labour:—

"How long, they say, 'how long, O cruel nation
Will you stand to move the world, on a child's heart—
Stifle down with a mailed heel its palpitation,
And tread onward to your throne amid the mart?"

("The Cry of the Children," E. B. Browning)

And if a poet's word is not considered evidence we can refer to many factual reports given by Government Inspectors, reformers and others. In a book published just before Queen Victoria came to the throne, and dealing with conditions which prevailed well into the Victorian era, the author, J. Fielden ("The Curse of the Factory system") wrote:—

"Cruelties of the most heart rending were practised upon the unoffending and friendless creatures who were thus consigned to the charge of master manufacturers; they . . . were harassed to the brink of death by excess labour . . . they were in many cases starved to the bone while flogged to their work . . .

"The beautiful and romantic valleys of Derbyshire, . . . secluded from the public eye, became the dismal solitudes of torture and of many a murder. The profits of manufacturers were enormous; but this only whetted the appetite it should have satisfied." (Fielden did not know his capitalists!)

So much for the "prosperity" of the Victorian era, that age of ruthless exploitation when the wealth and power of the ruling class was literally built on the blood and life of the workers.

The Coronation and its Meaning

Not content with telling us that the Coronation will usher in this new period of glory and prosperity, we are told that it will be a dedication and a consecration. Bishops have prated on the holiness of the occasion, politicians, with their ability to seize every opportunity, have tried to fill us with patriotism, and the whole collection of lick-spittles, ink-slingers and columnists of Fleet Street have combined to convince us of the promising life which lies ahead.

What is this dedication and to whom is this day consecrated? Prayers for the safe keeping of her Majesty will be offered up to God; and all over the country, if the Archbishop's suggestion is followed, people will join the choir at Westminster in singing "All people that on earth do dwell." And in that sense perhaps it will be a day of dedication. But behind the facade of prayer, and patriotism, there are other interests involved which makes the Coronation a day of dedication to Mammon.

The late King's body was scarcely cold in its grave, when every junk manufacturer in the Kingdom rushed to produce enormous quantities of shoddy souvenirs. Not one avenue for making money has been neglected. Even the "Gentry" tumbled over themselves to cash in on this "day of consecration." They have advertised their homes to let at fabulous rentals, from which even American millionaires have recoiled. Hotels and boarding houses, restaurants and nightclubs have put

up their charges, and anybody with window-space to let on the route of the procession has been courted, bribed and enriched.

Nothing has been overlooked in this money-making jamboree called the coronation. *The Star* fashion expert tells us:—

"If you're fired with a desire to be patriotic through and through, so you can be . . . right down to your corsets. Berlei are showing—as the star item of their new summer collection—a strapless one-piece controllette in elastic net and nylon voile in a choice of red, white or royal blue."

This then is the "holy" character of Coronation day, a day on which the money-makers will count their profits, and on which they will give their workers a day off on full pay. While they count their money they will join in the singing of the incantations at Westminster Abbey. And indeed they will have something to sing about for it is estimated that over twenty million pounds will accrue as a result of this "day of dedication." Is it not strange how holiness is so often linked with the "things of this world"?

A People's Coronation

Efforts have been made by means of propaganda to imbue this Coronation with a democratic flavour. For the first time, at least that is what we have been told, the people are to take part in this event. But again this claim is hollow. The only part that the "people" will have is to stand in the streets and at their windows, or crouch before their T.V. sets cheering the procession of as great a collection of parasites as have ever been seen together before.

Not a dignitary involved but is a wealthy banker, landowner, Field Marshal or Major-General. There will be Black rods, and Gold sticks, and Knights Pursuivants in profusion. Most of them directors of large Banking or Insurance Companies. Many of them huge land-owners who are no more representative of the people than is the Queen herself, a by no means poverty-stricken personage. Surrounded as she is by these wealthy courtiers and nurtured in Palaces with a background of wealth and splendour she is cushioned off from the ordinary cares that beset the people who will stand and cheer her as she passes through the streets.

We have no personal quarrel with the Queen. As

the occupant of the Throne of Great Britain she has no power. The monarchy has become a mere facade of authority, a rubber stamp signature at the bottom of State documents. The Queen's whole life is regulated by strictly-defined rules and a standard of behaviour is expected which would make even the humblest of us protest.

Surrounded at the Abbey by Bankers, landowners, Labour leaders and a "few representatives" of the Trade Unions her Majesty will perform her part, we have no doubt, with grace, charm and dexterity, and the Archbishop will intone at the right time and in the right places. The choirboys will contribute their "Vivats," and the people whose coronation we are told this is, will stand outside and cheer. Thus it has always been; the people on the outside looking in, wearing clothes which cost less than one button of the gorgeous raiment that they have made and which they are allowed to see only at a distance. That is all the people will receive or can expect from this "People's" coronation.

The ceremony to be performed on June 2nd has no meaning for us. It is of no consequence who sits on the throne, which flag or Royal Standard flies over Buckingham Palace; or whether her titles are Elizabeth II or I. We are not concerned with all the flummery and mediaeval mumbo-jumbo with which the event is to be celebrated. Nothing will have been changed. The private ownership of the means of life will continue with all its consequences. The threat of war, the general insecurity will not be abated one jot or tittle by this glorified circus. Not one of the claims made for this event will be fulfilled as far as the workers are concerned. The promises and allurements of a brilliant future will be forgotten almost as soon as the procession has disappeared from sight.

In the Psalms, some of which will be read during the service there is a phrase which we commend:—

"Oh, put not your trust in Princes, nor in any child of man . . ."

adding only the counsel to trust to yourselves, to your experience, to your knowledge to build a better Society in which all mankind will live in freedom, peace and security.

"Who would be free themselves must strike the blow"

A.S.

HUMAN NATURE AND SOCIALISM

Numerous undesirable social conditions have been and still are explained away or justified by the glib remark that "you can't change human nature." Yet the science of anthropology shows these conditions to be cultural acquisitions, subject to change, and not the inevitable result of something inherent in man. Let us try to see, then, the particular ways in which human nature is supposed to be unchangeable, and what follows from thinking in this way.

Human nature is held, by opponents of Socialism, to be unalterable in certain respects that effectively prevent any conscious improvement in social condi-

tions. Men, it is said, will go on acting in the same old ways, and so inevitably bring the same problems that have "always" faced them. Of course, if this were the case then it would be useless even to try to improve things; we might as well face the "inevitable" now. But those who hold this view obstinately refuse to have the courage of their convictions, and they are often found taking very active measures to avoid a fate, such as grinding poverty, that they forecast for others.

What are the reasons for holding and propagating the idea that "you can't change human nature"? From the point of view of those seeking too justify

Capitalism, there are many reasons. People are unemployed because they are "naturally lazy"; fight wars because they are "naturally belligerent"; cheat, injure and bankrupt each other because they "naturally act on the profit motive."

There are many variants of these arguments, and not all are put as directly as the examples quoted. Sometimes the objector to social change will try to coat the bitter pill that he forces himself to swallow. "Of course, it would be a good thing if people *could* always live in peace, but until we get a new race of human beings I am afraid this will be impossible." He wants social change, but only provided that certain impossible conditions can be fulfilled—which amounts to not wanting social change at all.

We can now see where all these arguments lead. It is toward the prevention of future change through the spread of a philosophy that justifies present evils. If men can be persuaded that what they want is impossible to achieve then they will give up struggling for it. Instead, they will content themselves with whatever crumbs they can pick up within the present set-up, in the knowledge that all social evils from which they suffer are "natural," and therefore unavoidable.

"Incurably Selfish"

There are two main ways in which human nature is said to be unalterable. One is that men are supposed to be universally and incurably selfish, and the other is that mankind is mostly stupid and unteachable, and that intelligence is the prerogative of a few "born" leaders.

Let us examine these statements to see what truth they contain. If men were really incurably selfish, then there could never have been any sort of stable society, because no one would have co-operated with anyone else. If men were really so stupid by nature, then they could never have overcome previous obstacles to the development of their productive forces, and Capitalism could never have grown out of Feudalism.

When we take a closer look at the "incurably selfish" argument, we see that it rests upon the assumption that everything that men do involves loss or sacrifice for other people. Now there is no question that *some* of the things men do have that effect. But there is equally no question that society depends for its very existence on the fact that there is co-operative behaviour, and that people *do* work at things which are of no immediate benefit to themselves.

We may infer from this that behaviour which benefits other people is at least as consistent with human nature as that which harms other people. Nevertheless, granting all this, it might still be true that selfishness exists in human nature side by side with social-mindedness, and that therefore it cannot be eradicated. Or, to put it more concretely, there are some things which men need so badly that they will injure other people in order to get them.

The answer to this is that, though such behaviour exists and may even be the general rule in property society, it is not natural to human beings. The fact that there is unselfish behaviour means that selfishness is not inherent in man. People only act selfishly or anti-socially when they can see no other way of obtaining what they desire. If there is another way of

obtaining what they desire (by co-operation, for instance) then there is no reason to suppose that they will not choose it when they see that it is better to do so.

Justification for Behaviour

It is important not to confuse selfishness with self-interest. Self-interest is the satisfaction of one's desires; selfishness is the satisfaction of one's desires at the expense of someone else. Self-interest is an integral part of human nature, but selfishness is not—unless it is assumed that everything we do is at someone else's expense. But we continually do things without detriment to other people, and the satisfaction of some of our desires, such as companionship and love, *involves* the satisfaction of other people's. Any selfish, anti-social behaviour that is present cannot therefore exist in the desires themselves, but only in the way they are sometimes satisfied.

Having seen that there is nothing in human nature that necessitates men's injuring one another, we must conclude that there is nothing in human nature that necessitates war. War can occur under certain conditions, but as far as human nature is concerned these conditions need not exist.

There is one contradiction in the argument of "selfish human nature" that we must point out. If it really is selfish then all men must share an equal guilt, and it is a case of one sinner condemning another. But those who use the argument give the lie to it themselves, because they impute incurable selfishness only to others and never to themselves. We have never met the objector to Socialism who seriously maintains that if an article were freely available he would still fight someone for his share.

The real reason for the doctrine of human selfishness is not hard to discover. It is a justification for the anti-social behaviour that a highly competitive society produces. The employer blandly counters the accusation of "selfish profiteering" with "selfish wage demand," and the worker who is not class-conscious falls for the trick. In reality, all the antagonisms result from the nature of the system that all except socialists support, and not from the selfish natures of either capitalists or workers.

"Stupid and Unteachable"

The other way in which human nature is commonly said to be unalterable is that people are, on the whole, stupid and unteachable. Human intelligence is supposed to be too weak to enable people to solve the complex problems that face them—they must fight a losing battle with ignorance. The particular form in which we usually meet this argument is that most people are incapable of understanding Socialism. Allied to this is the assertion that ordinary folk would never be able to run society in their own interest.

It must be noted that, although most people are supposed to be incapable of understanding what are sometimes called the abstruse principles of Socialism, the understanding of such complicated matters as the balance of payments or the American electoral system is assumed to be quite within their power. Propagandists for Capitalism never tell us that we are too stupid to understand the tortuous arguments used, for instance, to prove that the way to preserve peace is to

prepare for war. The point is not that arguments either way are too complicated and therefore beyond universal comprehension, but that the *will to learn* is actively discouraged when its threat to the continuation of Capitalism becomes apparent.

From the unwarranted assertion that most people are stupid flows the equally unwarranted assertion that therefore they must always have leaders. And why must they have leaders? Because those who are in the position of having a following do not wish to lose their privileged position. The existence of leaders and "the led" implies that the former have the power to make decisions, whereas the latter have not. In co-operative enterprises the concept of leadership is foreign, since all the participants have a common purpose. When you know what you are doing you do not need somebody else to "lead" you to do it. The leader is thus the reflection of "the led," and the measure of their ignorance (not stupidity), and both disappear when

people know what they want and how to get it.

As we saw in the first article, human nature is strictly what is common to the natures of the vast mass of all human beings. It has nothing to do with possession or non-possession of knowledge, which is governed by environmental factors, such as whether the particular knowledge is available to people.

The varying capacity for acquisition of knowledge (which is sometimes called the intelligence factor) means nothing more than that some people learn certain things quicker than others, and does *not* prove that some are incapable of learning. Language—the expression for all communicable experience—is the possession of humanity as a whole, and it is the crassest prejudice to suppose that its fruits are beyond the reach of any individual or section of society.

S.R.P.

(Next Article: The Role of the Socialist.)

ABOUT BOOKS

It has been said that, "He who cannot reason is a fool; he who will not is a bigot; he who dare not is a slave." Everyone reasons about something, but the majority of workers form their political attachments out of prejudice, not from a reasoned understanding.

On a sunny, summer, Sunday morning in 1933 a speaker of the Socialist Party stepped on to a platform opposite the Checquers public house at Dagenham, in Essex, and took this as the theme of his address. One thing, he claimed, that marked the Socialist off from the adherents of other political creeds, was that the Socialist arrived at his point of view from a process of clear reasoning, whilst the reasoning of the others, if they did any, was a confused jumbling of ideas. The speaker drew a picture for his audience of many men entering a building, some of them throwing their hats, coats, scarves, gloves and other impedimenta into a dark corner all in one big heap. Other men placed their hats, coats, etc., in an orderly arrangement on pegs on a wall and took stock of the number of the peg as well as its particular location. When all these men left the building, those who had cast their clothing on the heap were in hopeless confusion in trying to sort them out. The others, of course, were able to collect their belongings easily and in orderly fashion.

Millions of workers get bogged down with their political reasoning, because they have never learned to think systematically. The carpenter, the architect, the motor mechanic, the doctor, the electrician and practically all other workers will think clearly and concisely about their familiar day to day tasks. Outside of that, when they probe into less familiar fields of thought, they get miserably confused and frequently makes fools of themselves. When they argue about religion or politics they bring out a series of unfounded assertions and, as often as not, end up by losing their tempers.

Clear reasoning is not a difficult process once one has learned to avoid certain pitfalls and to follow certain rules. There are two little books, a handy size for the pocket and easy on the purse, which will help to put one on the right track.

"Thinking to Some Purpose" by L. Susan

Stebbing is a Pelican book published at 2s. It is referred to as "A manual of first-aid to clear thinking," and so it is. It will help any striving thinker to avoid the booby-traps, save him from arriving at hasty and illogical conclusions, and show him the faults in other people's reasoning.

Another book, at the same price is, "Clearer Thinking (Logic for Everyman)" by A. E. Mander and published by Watts and Co. In the foreword to this book it is pointed out that thinking is skilled work and no one can expect to be efficient at it unless they learn and practice, any more than they can expect to be efficient at playing tennis, golf, bridge or some musical instrument unless they learn the rules and technique and practice them.

A Socialist, having learned to think clearly, finds it necessary to express himself equally clearly. It is unsatisfactory to arrive at a sound and logical political understanding and be unable to propagate it in a manner that can be easily understood and assimilated by others.

Practically everyone in Great Britain these days has learned enough English grammar to be able to make his ideas up into sentences and paragraphs. If the ideas are jumbled and confused, the words and sentences used to express them will betray the confusion. That does not mean that clear thinking and sound, logical ideas will result in equally clear and logical expression. A sparkling jewel of thought can easily be lost to sight in a maze of ungrammatical verbiage. Worse still, it can be lost to sight in a maze of *grammatical* verbiage. Particularly is this so when writing is the medium of expression.

The ability to set down one's thoughts on paper in plain, straightforward, simply understood phrases, with no superfluous words, must be cultivated. There was a book that was a great help in this matter; "On the Art of Writing" by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, published by Guild Books (paper cover) for 1s. One does not see it around much these days but the best chapters from it are to be found in the various books of selected material from the writings and lectures of Quiller-Couch. The

famous lecture on jargon is to be found in "Q Anthology" compiled and edited by F. Britain and published by Dent.

A more recent useful book on this subject is "Plain Words" by Sir Ernest Gowers and published by the Stationery Office (paper cover) for 2s. This book, having dealt with the need to be correct in all statements, goes on to instruct in the choice of words; how to avoid the superfluous word, choosing the familiar word, choosing the concrete word, then tells how to handle the words that have been chosen. It concludes with a chapter on punctuation. It is not a grammar. It is a book of advice based upon a study of other

people's mistakes and confused writings. It does a very good job.

"A.B.C. of Plain Words" by the same author and also published by the Stationery office (paper 3s., cloth 4s. 6d.) is a supplement to "Plain Words." It takes the material contained in "Plain Words," plus a little extra, and arranges it in a handy alphabetical form useful for quick reference.

There are probably other and bigger books on these subjects, but those we have mentioned are at a price that will not distress a proletarian pocket and, for that price, are remarkably good books.

W. WATERS.

SLINGS AND ARROWS

The Wages of Philanthropy

A poet of the eighteenth century commented that "Virtue is its own reward." That thought is often quoted and applied, especially when workers want a rise in pay. It is nice to know, however, that occasionally virtue brings other and more tangible rewards than the mere satisfaction of knowing one has been virtuous.

When, in 1892, Lord Rowton built the first of his enormous lodging-houses, he did so because he believed (*Daily Express*, 30/4/53) "every man should have a room to himself—with a door—for 6d. a night." Five such lodging houses were established and although every man was entitled to pay his sixpence and get his room—with a door—only the poor turned up. The rich, either ignorant of these facilities, or not wishing to stop the poor using them, continued to reside at the Ritz or Claridges. But time has a habit of evening things out and in due course the rich were duly rewarded for their consideration, as we shall see.

It is a far cry from the nineties of the last century to the present time but Rowton Houses still go on and although the price has increased to 2s. 3d. per night nevertheless there is a constant demand for accommodation. So much so that the dividends on the capital of Rowton Houses Ltd. has recently been increased. Its properties are reputed to be worth £2,000,000, and the shares, if the firm were sold, would have a break-up value of £10 each. The City Editor of the *Daily Express* tells us that although the share and property dealers are envious and would like to do a deal in Rowton House shares their chances are slender, for the shares are held by people "who put service to the not-so-wealthy before profit." It is perhaps a coincidence that the shares of Rowton Houses are regarded as gilt-edged and that that institution of putting "service before profit," the Britannic Assurance Co. hold 11,000 shares. When "service to the not-so-wealthy" is accompanied by an increased dividend then virtue gets more than its "own reward," and when Ecclesiastes wrote "Cast thy bread upon the waters and it shall return after many days," he little dreamed that it would return buttered.

The Rest is Silence

Dr. Dalton, bright star in the Labour firmament, has published the first instalment of his three volume autobiography. Apart from a few admissions and

statements, the book has no merit either as a work of literature or a study of political events. In the normal course of events this book would not be mentioned in these columns as it would be a waste of space to do so. But some of the disclosures are worthy of comment because they throw a significant light on the present Labour leaders who pretend to be more prescient, and more faithful to the cause than the idols of yesteryear.

Dr. Dalton tells us in 1953, that he knew in 1924 or 1925 that Ramsay MacDonald was vain, conceited, snobbish and untrustworthy. But between those years and 1931 Dalton was his supporter and indeed served under him in the second Labour Government. Never, until after the debacle of 1931, did Dalton and the rest of the gang who pretend to have known all along, say one word which would lead either the electorate or rank and file Labourites to believe that all was not well with the Party leadership. On the contrary their mouths dripped honeyed words of admiration.

Dalton quotes Tom Johnston as saying "If the party meeting only got to know of a few things like this, they'd all be climbing up the walls, not just the I.L.P. but the soberest trade unionists in the Party." But if Dalton knew and Johnston knew how was it that the Party meeting did not know? The truth was concealed.

We are left then with two conclusions. If MacDonald betrayed the Labour Party and was suspect all the time then those who suspected him were culpable. If on the other hand, they did not know, but pretend to do so in order to appear wise, then what reliance can be placed on them? Here they were, working day by day with men whom they now call traitors and they remained blithely innocent of the fact. Are these the leaders who ask for support because of their qualifications?

We are also indebted to Dalton for telling us something of the quality of the Labour leadership. He tells us that when the Labour Government was being formed in 1929, would-be Ministers besieged MacDonald and some of them wept and fainted in their anxiety. What a disgusting spectacle.

That is the sort of thing that goes on when Leaders take refuge in secrecy and when they rely for support as they must do (or they wouldn't be leaders), on the political ignorance of their followers.

Who knows but that in another twenty-five years

we may be reading some future Dalton on some present day traitor or betrayer of the Labour Party. For judging on past experience we don't know what goes on in the hierarchial section of the Labour Party; the Party meeting does not know and the rank and file do not know. We can only guess. And we are on reasonably safe ground if we venture to predict that the present day Labour Leaders are as anxious as those of the past to remain leaders, and to take power in order to run capitalism.

Whose Mother isn't using Persil?

Among the American prisoners released by the Koreans are a small group, who according to the Authorities have been infected with Communist propaganda. And, since the United States is a land of freedom, and the right to think as one pleases is upheld by the American Constitution, this small group has been sent to a hospital for treatment. The treatment will consist of reading books and seeing newsreels approved by the authorities, so that they may be cured of their infection. The State Department announces: "The privations and dangers suffered by prisoners of the Communists, may have made them susceptible to the Communist brain-washing techniques."

Here is some peculiar reasoning. Are we to understand that the way to make people agree with and become permeated by one's ideas is to make them

suffer privations and dangers? If it is true, as we have been told by sundry journalists, that American prisoners of war were badly treated by the Chinese and Koreans then how could a "small group" become infected with their oppressors ideas? No one has heard of any Jew who suffered in concentration camps at the hands of Hitler, having to be "brainwashed" because he had become convinced that the Germans were a "Master race." How then could prisoners subjected to "privations and dangers" by their captors become convinced of the benefits to be derived from their ideas?

If it is because of the ill-treatment, are these returned prisoners to be even worse-treated so that they may become imbued with the benefits and joys of the "American way of life"?

As if these unfortunate prisoners have not had enough, psychiatrists have been turned loose on them in order to "brainwash" them back to a belief in free enterprise, democracy, and Americanism. It has not yet occurred to these psychiatrists and "brainwash" experts that men who have been held prisoners for many years and whose subsequent release is dependent upon their change of attitude, will "brainwash" themselves so fast as to outdo any claim made by the makers of Persil soap.

If it were not so tragic this whole episode would make a good subject for an Aldwych farce!

S.A.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Another May Day has passed and it is pleasing to note that very successful outdoor rallies were held by the Party in Hyde Park and on Clapham Common. Glasgow (City and Kelvingrove Branches) ran a rally in the Cosmo Cinema and this, too, proved a great success.

Just a reminder to members. During the summer months considerable time and effort is spent on outdoor propaganda meetings. These provide, in the majority of cases, excellent opportunities for selling the "Socialist Standard" and pamphlets of the Party. Whilst it is interesting to listen to the speaker, and at times stimulate questions from the audience, it is certainly gratifying if members make greater efforts to sell our literature—the best form of propaganda—the written word. An overall attempt to increase the sales of the "Socialist Standard" and pamphlets will not only assist the Party financially, but help on the work of establishing Socialism. Why not have a go?

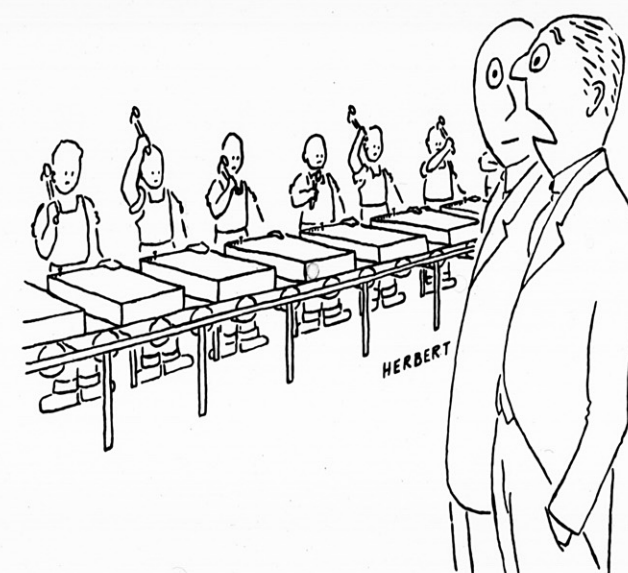
The Central Organiser would like members interested in the Summer School, being held on Saturday and Sunday, June 20th and 21st, at "Treetops," Farley Green, to get in touch with him without delay in order to reserve accommodation.

For members who prefer a day at the sea the first of the Ealing Branch summer social and outdoor propaganda trips is on Sunday, June 21st. This one is to Southsea. Will any members wanting seats reserved contact E. Warnecke at Head Office or c/o of the

Ealing Branch Secretary, as quickly as possible.

Paddington Branch reports that their Social on May 9th was successful socially and financially. A very happy evening was enjoyed by all and the Branch were able to make a donation to Head Office from the proceeds.

P.H.



"That's the trouble with the workers — they take no interest in what they produce"

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JUNE,



1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

OF KINGS AND QUEENS

UNDER Elizabeth I the first poor law was introduced; Under Elizabeth II the mass of people are still poor. In the centuries between we have had an industrial revolution that covered the country with densely populated cities and huge factories, and converted a large part of the population into makers, menders and attenders of machines; conditioned to work at high pressure, fight at high pressure, listen at high pressure and even play at high pressure.

The footpad has gone from the road but the roads are more dangerous than ever from fast-moving traffic; in spite of the developments in medicine and sanitary engineering illness is rife in the overcrowded cities; the leisurely meandering of life has been succeeded by a breathless speed and the urge to cut out the "waste" of quiet contemplation and the joy in the production of things well done. Cataracts of books have been published on social questions, on co-operation, on human kindness in one form or another; books that have had a wide circulation and the recommendation of prominent people and powerful organisations; yet the world has been decimated by wars of increasing dimensions and ferocity, famines rage on a vaster scale on different parts of the earth, fresh nourishing food has become harder to obtain by the mass of people, cruelty and inhuman conduct organised by governments have spread over the world, and fear and insecurity have become ingrained into the outlook of all.

Trading, which originated in the barter of useful things for mutual advantage, had become an object in itself under the first Elizabeth and has since spread to everything and to everywhere until nowadays the different products of man's teaming brain and skilful hands all depend upon trade, are produced for trading; even the producer himself is the subject of trading—the scientist, the labourer, the artist, the entertainer, the player of games, and the like are bought, sold, lent or leased, in this trading that is based upon the pursuit of profit. The end of centuries of invention, contriving and building has, so far, been the commercialising of everything. In this country, once described as "the

richest land under the sun," a chancellor of the exchequer has just drawn acclamations for a Budget, easing a few restrictions, which his eulogisers describe as "leading us out from the confines of restriction to free endeavour and greater rewards for effort." Such is the legacy of centuries of achievement.

In such a world pomp, display and glamour are a useful means to help disarm antagonism and lull discontent; they are like water in the desert to thirsty travellers, a welcome diversion to those who pine for excitement and display to enliven the monotony of a machine conditioned society and who look for some outlet, in a cramping world, for normal human emotions. To the socialist the coronation festival has no more significance than this—a buttress to maintain conditions as they are.

Royalty is only a product of society in certain historical times. In some periods the holder of the crown has had considerable power, both in this country and abroad. At present, wherever it exists it is only the figurehead of sections of the capitalist class. In spite of hereditary succession leading representatives are removable if they do not toe the line to what is required of them as Edward VIII and others have found to their cost. In this country their statements and actions are determined by the particular Cabinet of the party or combination of parties in power. Part of their function as sovereigns is to fob off discontent and dissatisfaction, and give a fillip to the British capitalist group, by attending ceremonies of different kinds, making tours and being the centre of scintillating festivals. Their job is not so rosy because they have no respite from the glare of limelight.

That kings and queens are neither a social necessity nor a divinely inspired condition is evident from the rapidity with which so many have lost their places in recent times and have hardly been missed. Whether the figure-head of nations be kings or queens, dictators or presidents, prime-ministers or popes, the property basis of society, with the evils that flow from this property basis for the mass of people, remains much the same. Society still continues to be split into a relatively small section of privileged living in idleness and comfort, and a vast mass of unprivileged who live by working and gain comparatively little from doing so.

In a socialist society there would be no place for kingship or other figureheads. The means of living being the common possession of all mankind, people will work together in co-operative harmony to make life as pleasant and colourful as human ingenuity can contrive. There will be a joy in working together that is absent today. Gatherings for spontaneous pleasure and the outlet of effervescing emotions will not require figureheads and spurious propaganda to inspire them. What mankind has made possible by its accomplishments in different directions over the centuries will become means to make life as full as possible for all instead of being used, as today, to increase the wealth of the privileged. Kings and Queens will be relieved of their monotonous round of useless ceremonies, and the wealthy of the problem of wondering how to occupy their time and squander their easily got wealth. People will no longer be required to kow-tow as subjects to monarchs or wage-slaves to masters.

"Kings are only kings because we are on our knees. Let us arise."

CHURCHILL'S DAMP SQUIB

ON May the 11th Sir Winston Churchill made his speech proposing that the leading Western Powers should have informal private meetings "at the highest level" with Russian representatives in order to explore the possibility of relaxing the international tension. He was not very confident that worthwhile results would be obtained but argued that the signs of change in Russia since Stalin's death made it desirable to try.

"It might well be that no hard-and-fast agreements would be reached, but there might be a general feeling among those gathered together that they might do something better than tear the human race, including themselves, into bits."

"I only say this might happen. I do not see why anyone should be frightened of having a try at it."

"At the worst, participation in the meeting would establish more intimate contacts. At the best we might have a generation of peace."

(Daily Herald, 12/5/53.)

It was received with rapturous approval in the daily Press and among the Labour Party Opposition in the House of Commons. The *Daily Herald*, reporting its reception in the Commons wrote that "the Prime Minister was several times more loudly applauded by the Labour Party than by the Tories." And on the following day Mr. Attlee, in his reply, stated that Churchill's "general tone and approach" had been warmly welcomed on the Labour side. (Daily Herald 13/5/53.)

"His survey of world affairs, like Sir Winston Churchill's the day before, was constantly cheered by both sides."

Beyond the modest expectation that something might come from these personal contacts among the topline politicians there was very little in any of the speeches. But the world situation has become so acute and is generally viewed with so much despair that even a small grain of hope sufficed to rouse enthusiasm among the millions of potential cannonfodder of the next world war.

How small the grounds for optimism was admitted or implied in the speeches themselves for it has all been tried already and in vain. Churchill recalled that, in addition to the personal contacts with Stalin that preceded the cold war, he had in 1945 sent a "peace appeal" telegram to Stalin urging the avoidance of abuse and counter abuse. He also now tentatively proposed a new treaty to guarantee Germany against attack by Russia and Russia against attack by Germany—a new "Locarno" treaty. But the Locarno Treaty of 1925, which guaranteed France and Germany in that way, was a dead letter. As the *Daily Herald* pointed out,

"When Hitler violated it by re-occupying and fortifying the Rhineland, no action was taken." (Daily Herald, 12/5/53.)

The keynote of the Churchill speech was the need for "realism"; gone are the high hopes of universal peace through United Nations, now, in effect, we should get back to the old diplomacy of trying to do a deal piecemeal on each issue as it arises. Or as Mr. Attlee put it:—

"The Prime Minister, I think, made a very realistic speech and it is necessary to be realistic in foreign affairs."

So many critics do not realise that all international relations are a subject for everyone and you cannot do just what you want to do."

But the significance of this confession of lack of faith was not explicitly put by Mr. Attlee though it was implied when he stated in the same speech:—

"It is desirable wherever possible, and in foreign affairs particularly, that government policy should have the support of all."

It is an admission by Mr. Attlee that the Labour Party accepts the view that there should be a "British" foreign policy confronting the National policies of all the other Powers. And as we live in a world of capitalist national groups all alike engaged in the cut-throat struggle for survival and expansion, this means acceptance of all the trade rivalries, contests for markets and colonies, the armaments and armed bases and the wars big and little that ensue as the contestants manoeuvre for advantage. Against this background all the aggressions of all the capitalist national groups are equally "realistic"; they only cease to be so when, through insufficient military force to sustain the aggression, they come to failure.

This "realism" is for the working class not a doctrine of hope or even of making the best of things but a policy of being passively submerged in the drift to war.

The illusion of the Labour Party as of the Tories and Communists is to suppose that there are ways of running capitalism which will avoid war altogether or at least will confine the wars to some other parts of the world, leaving Britain immune. There is no such policy. If by realistic is meant recognition of the facts of the situation and avoidance of self-deception the only policy for the working class of all countries is to get rid of capitalism. While capitalism continues, in Britain, America, Russia and all the other countries great and small, it will continue to be true as Mr. Attlee said, that in foreign relations he cannot do just what he wants to do. Only Socialists want in foreign affairs the Socialist human relationships that they want at home, and only as the workers of all countries become Socialists will they have identical aims which will obviate all international conflict.

H.

PAMPHLETS

"The Socialist Party and War"	1/- (Post free 1/2)
"Russia Since 1917"	1/- " " 1/2
"The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years"	1/- " " 1/2
"The Racial Problem—A Socialist Analysis"	1/- " " 1/2
"Socialism"	4d. " " 6d.
"Socialism or Federal Union?"	4d. " " 6d.
"The Socialist Party: Its Principles and Policy"	4d. " " 6d.
"Is Labour Government the Way to Socialism?"	4d. " " 6d.
"Nationalisation or Socialism?"	6d. " " 8d.

All obtainable from the Literature Committee, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

PASSING SHOW

Hay while the Sun Shines

Recent events in Indo-China have provided an interesting object-lesson in the game of power politics as it is played in the middle of the 20th century. The protagonists have been the French Government on the one hand and the native rulers of Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia on the other.

The Viet-Minh forces first crossed the boundary separating Viet Nam, to which they had previously confined their operations, and Laos, on or about April 13th. One of the disturbing features, from the French point of view, was that a number of Laotians joined in the fighting on the side of the rebels. The king of Cambodia, which is the third of the Indo-Chinese States, lost no time in pointing the moral. On his way home from Paris on April 19th, he gave an interview in New York, and complained about the powers of the French over the Cambodian judiciary, armed forces and economy generally. Unless the French took immediate steps towards granting "more independence to Cambodia" there was a real danger that the Cambodians would go over to Viet-Minh, he said. The French ruling class was more hurt than aggrieved at this open threat, if we may believe M. Letourneau, the Minister for the Associated States. On April 22nd he said that "I am bound to state, with all the responsibility which rests on me, that the independence of Cambodia has been granted fully and without reservation." What, then, were French forces doing in Cambodia? Why, they were there merely to "watch over the independence of the Cambodian people," said M. Letourneau.

The Imperialists Misunderstood

On the same day decrees were issued in Paris under which the French Commissioners in Viet Nam, Laos and Cambodia were to be called High Commissioners in future; this move was said by the French to confirm the independence granted to these States within the French Union. On April 27th the French Commander-in-Chief in Indo-China, General Salan, issued a statement that "the Indo-Chinese war was not always well understood." General Salan was convinced that, "when doubts in the minds of the people of Viet Nam and of Cambodia about the nature of the independence that France had granted to these nations were cleared up, the threat of terrorism and the effect of propaganda would lose their power." But two days later the Cambodian Prime Minister, unimpressed by the fact that he would now be able to take his orders from a High Commissioner instead of from a mere Commissioner, said that if France did not grant the Cambodian demands, the people would answer the call of the rebels and Cambodia would be lost to the French. Meanwhile, the native ruling class in Viet Nam had been making similar representations to the French, and on May 8th M. Letourneau gave an "assurance, in the name of the French Government, that no initiative will be taken and no agreement made by France in any question concerning Viet Nam, or generally affecting the future of Indo-China, without first consulting and obtaining the formal agreement of the Viet Namese Government."

Danger Past

But when this promise was given, events had already taken a turn which made it unnecessary. On May 7th it was reported that the Viet-Minh forces had begun to withdraw. And on May 10th the French Government, without asking anyone's advice, announced the devaluation of the Indo-Chinese piastre from 17 French francs to 10. This drew strong protests from the Government of Laos and from the Prime Minister of Viet Nam, who said that devaluation would dislocate the economy of the country. So far, no French official spokesman has come forward to explain how this unilateral decision is consonant with the independence that is supposed to have been granted to the Indo-Chinese States; the official line is simply that the French treaties with the Associated States allow the French Government to act by itself in matters of this kind. Now that the external danger has disappeared, at least temporarily, there is no longer any need to represent the native ruling circles in Indo-China as free from French control. But if the Viet-Minh forces advance again when the rainy season has ended, we may see the whole shabby play revived for a further performance.

New Jerseys

Mr. Donnelly, the Labour M.P. for Pembroke, is concerned at the rumours in the Labour Party that "public ownership" would in future take the form of the acquisition of majority shareholdings. He said recently that "the Labour Party rank and file will say, 'This is not Socialism, it is State Capitalism, it is the same team in new jerseys.'" Mr. Donnelly is right to be disturbed. Clearly the buying up of the majority of shares in any business by the State is not Socialism, nor has it anything to do with Socialism. But what essential difference is there between this form of State Capitalism and the form known as nationalisation? In the former, as in the latter, the shareholders would be compensated with interest-bearing State-bonds, the workers would be allowed no voice in the running of the industry and would continue to be exploited, and the first concern would still be production for profit, not for use. If Mr. Donnelly wishes to convince us that, in spite of everything, he is a Socialist, he will have to follow up this statement with another one denouncing nationalisation in the same terms.

To Keep Operations on an Economic Basis

The real nature of nationalisation seems to be understood more clearly in India, where the Government recently introduced a Bill to nationalise the airlines. As reported in the British press, the Minister for Communications, in his introductory speech, made no pretence that this would be an advance for "Socialism," nor did he allege that the workers in the industry would derive any benefit from the move. He advocated the change solely on the ground that the impending need to replace Dakotas in the services run by Indian air companies by more modern and expensive aircraft would need resources beyond the command of individual companies. To employ these new aircraft, and thus keep operations on an economic basis, "would be possible only if the present large number of operating

units were substantially reduced," he said. Thus State industry was presented in its true light as an amalgamation of independent companies made necessary by the demands of 20th-century capitalism, and carried out for precisely the same reasons that lead private capitalists to form corporations, monopolies and cartels on their own initiative.

Freedom for the Few

The granting of independence to India, Pakistan and Ceylon in the years immediately following the war was hailed by the Labour Party as a great step forward. Socialists were unable to see that the substitution of one ruling class for another would be of any advantage to the workers. It was obvious that capitalism would continue, as it must, until the great majority of workers understand and want Socialism. And Socialists believed that political and social injustices, which have their origin in and are inseparable from the private property systems of society (although they are modified from country to country by the conditions prevailing locally) would also continue. This view has, in fact, been confirmed.

Tamils and Untouchables

The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council has approved as being intra vires, legislation passed in Ceylon which has the effect of depriving of the vote a large part of the Indian Tamil community resident there. The particular member of the Tamil community whose case was before them had, in fact, been on the electoral register from 1935 until 1950, when the Act in question was passed. Indian official circles have expressed themselves strongly on the question of this

legislation and its discrimination against one part of the community; but in India itself, on April 19th, several members of the House of the People made bitter protests against the continuing practice of untouchability, which is said to affect between seventy and eighty million Indians. One member said: "Mr. Nehru speaks frequently of the condition of Indians in South Africa. But you find South Africa in every village and every nook and corner of India."

These examples go to show that while a system of society based on private property flourishes, it is useless to try to remove the social injustice which stems from it by reforms like the grant of Dominion status.

Bent on our Destruction

Advertisements are often distasteful. But few advertisements can be so objectionable as advertisements for armaments. The usual technique is followed. First, the consumer must be persuaded that he wants something, and wants it badly; then he must be convinced that the particular company advertising can supply the want he has begun to feel better than its rivals. A large group of aircraft companies has recently been advertising its warplanes in a series of half-page adverts, called "In Defence of Freedom." It begins by building up the idea that arms are essential, by references to "that wilful group of men bent on our destruction," and by insisting that "we must build up our strength to the point where no one will dare to attack us." After five paragraphs of this, the reader is treated to a list of the excellent fighters, bombers, anti-submarine planes and the other instruments of destruction which this particular group is able to supply to cash customers.

A. W. E.

MUTUAL AID IN ADVERSITY

It is frequently argued that, notwithstanding the validity of the Socialist case against Capitalism, Socialism is foredoomed to failure because of "human nature." This last-ditch argument of capitalist apologists is based on the assumption that human nature is fundamentally anti-social and self-destructive. The absurdity of this notion is easily demonstrated, if only by observing that, were this true, the human species would have destroyed itself in the first generation.

The idea that it is only by the good offices of our "natural" leaders in maintaining a vast integrated structure of legal, police and military organisation that we are restrained from wholesale robbing, raping and murdering of our neighbours is one actively encouraged by the propaganda agencies of Capitalism. The Press, the cinema, radio and religions are all concerned in representing the coercive machinery of Capitalism as a set of benevolent institutions, exercising a firm but impartial discipline in the interest of society at large.

The Socialist argues that it is human nature to desire co-operation and social intercourse. It is the influence of and the reaction to the economic environment, based on oppression, insecurity and ruthless competition that forces men to behave in an apparently unco-operative and anti-social manner—a manner entirely opposed to the fundamental promptings of human

nature.

Occasionally, particularly at times of singular stress, when fellow creatures are subjected to exceptional privations and sufferings, human nature breaks through the brittle veneer of civilised behaviour and all thoughts of personal gain and advantage are submerged in a vast social effort to aid those in distress. The Capitalist spokesmen note these manifestations with considerable interest but are apparently, unable to interpret them in terms of their popular "human nature" theory. The Editor of the "Observer" (5.4.53) asks:—

"Why should it take an emergency to bring out the best in people? This was often asked during air raids in the war, and again at the time of the recent East Coast floods. The spontaneous response to the floods was felt to be remarkably different from the grumbling inertia often detected in post-war Britain, especially in the industrial field."

It is evident that the Editor is disturbed at the apparent inconsistency of a people who will give of their best to help their fellows in an emergency, but who cannot be persuaded to show the same spirit in applying themselves to the relief of the emergency which threatens industrial profits. He continues:—

"When the floods broke, people showed exactly the virtues and the spirit needed in a modern industrial society. Machines and material had to be moved quickly to the coast, and so had a labour force of many

thousands. There had to be a service of engineers and technicians, and a system of administrative control . . . the total organisation worked well, mainly because so many people worked willingly and in relative harmony."

Now, why should this be so? Why, for instance, should a gang of men work "with fortitude and persistence, under conditions of unrelieved hardship" near a spot where a short time ago "thousands of men struck work partly because they had been denied a tea-break"? The Editor supplies his own answers:—

"The motive force was enthusiasm, sweeping away the inhibitions and protective restrictions which persist in many of our industries."

"Nobody on the East Coast was afraid of working too hard or of working himself out of a job . . . nobody was worried by the thought that he was working to make profits for someone else."

"Part of the answer, perhaps, was given . . . by a man working strenuously on the defences of Canvey Island—I know that *this* job is worth while."

The Editor of the "Observer" is, of course, concerned with the problem of harnessing this enthusiasm and feeling of "worth-whileness" to the needs of

industry, and he sees the answer in terms of industrial relations. With that problem we are not concerned, but what is of interest to us is the evidence of the fact, clearly given in this article, that when events temporarily push the daily struggle into the background, human nature compels men and women, in spite of a life-time under the "blow-you-Jack" rules of Capitalism, to co-operate and to enjoy co-operating for their mutual well-being.

" . . . once the tragic side of the disaster had receded, people scarcely bothered to disguise the fact that they were enjoying themselves. They seemed to welcome the chance to work without sparing themselves, in co-operation with others, and for the good of an obviously stricken community."

And when Capitalism, with its tragic toll of war and poverty-stricken victims and its legacy of insecurity and misery has finally receded, people will still welcome the chance to work without sparing themselves, in co-operation with others, for the good of the Socialist community.

H. J. G.

"Dear Sir, it is with deep regret!"

A MANAGER GETS HIS CARDS

A MAN has written to the newspapers to make a complaint. His complaint is that his employers have given him the sack. A popular week-end paper gave it prominence, with the comment that "its hidden tragedy that makes it worth the reading."

As this is something happening to people every day, the reader may wonder what all the fuss is about. The answer is that the complainant was not an ordinary man. By this, we do not mean that he had double joints, or second sight. He was a works manager.

"If you are earning, as I was £1,500 or so a year, the men in the workshops envy you. They call themselves the under dogs. They think you've got it easy, ordering them about . . . But if the Company gets into difficulties, the first thing that comes under scrutiny is the higher salary list . . . They (the under dogs) have chances of several hundreds to my one of getting another post because there's only one works manager and 200 or more hands." (*News of the World*, 5/4/53).

Our well-educated and expensively-trained manager who, of course, is not a mere "hand," but a highly qualified "brain," with technical qualifications, two degrees, and thirty years' administrative experience, has made some important discoveries.

"Nobody wants a man of 53 whose job has collapsed under him," he says.

And yet his own letter tells us that he knew what the end would be, "I had, in fact, spent the last twelve months in pruning the factory staff to the extent that if the firm ever got busy again it would be very short of skilled operatives."

But even a common hand, without degrees, would know that "pruning" staff (giving other people the sack) is hardly likely to prove a permanent occupation, even in a large factory.

What would you do? he asks, and answers, first you apply to your professional institute. No good, too old. Second, you go to the Special Appointments Bureau of the Ministry of Labour. No good, "things

are quiet just now." Meanwhile, your six months' cheque is being exhausted, you will have to live on your savings. Savings! You had to live up to the job, dress well, run a car, entertain. What savings?

Next, worry all your business friends. "I should think 25 per cent. of British industry is bearing my name in mind," he says sardonically. "Gone by now are the hopes of a job at the kind of salary I used to enjoy. Half the amount—I'd jump at it—go anywhere—do anything. Anyone want a secretary-stooge? Or a butler-valet cum gardener-handyman, or a chauffeur?"

"The story of a man who climbed the ladder of success only to have it fall under him at the age of 53," says the Editor's blurb. A commonplace story, you think.

"I wonder what the remedy is for cases like mine? Is it just rotten luck or is there something else wrong somewhere? I cannot decide," says our unhappy ex-staff pruner.

These are the most valuable lines of his long statement.

The first thing is the pathetic folly of imagining that anyone is immune from the hazards and blows of the profit system. There is no escape. There are no special cases. Whether a man is manager at £1,500, or messenger at £200, anybody employed by somebody, or something else, like Public Corporation, Company or Board, or just a "guy'nor," can be dis-employed (sacked) by those employers at will. Leering round the shoulder of every employed person, Dustman or Duke of Windsor, War-Lord, or Warehouseman is the malevolent demon called the Threat of the Sack, making the eternal dream of the employee "security" (Welfare State and all), a weary nightmare.

Employment is dependence and subservience of members of the property-less class upon the owners of wealth. Whether these workers are well-paid managers or low-paid domestic helots is irrelevant. "Improvements" in the conditions of wage-takers, as our manager

has now discovered, frequently turn out, in the finish, to be the reverse. The fact that a job carries £1,500 a year allows the employer to pick the youthful and energetic suitably-qualified man and burn him up quickly.

Small consolation for the employee, having gone for the big lot, to find it does not last. This is the simple explanation of the fabulous (?) salaries of actresses, athletic champions and boxers, whose fortunes and life may hang on one blow.

It also explains the basis of so-called "permanent" and "regular" employment, such as that of State employees, Civil Servants, Railwaymen, Teachers and Postmen as opposed to casual labour subject to rapid fluctuation in alternating trade movements (Dockers, Building, Snow-clearers, Canvassers).

So it is that the Postal Authorities, by offering "Establishment" in "permanent" employment, can take their pick of a larger bunch, without high wages. Thus the great "progress" of the workers under Capitalism is to find themselves raised higher up, only to be smashed harder down.

Having got his motor-driver's or gardener's job (and he will be by no means the first degree'd man to sweep the streets), our manager must now, at 53, start a stiff course in a new tricky subject, Marxian economics. There he will find the answer to his questions, and stop wondering.

He will read in Volume I of "Capital" these pregnant lines:—

"Just as little as better clothing, food and treatment, and a larger allowance do away with the exploitation of the slave so little do they set aside that of the wage-worker. A rise in the price of labour as a consequence of accumulation of capital, only means, in fact, that the length and weight of the golden chain the wage-worker has already forged for himself, allow of a relaxation of tension of it." ("Capital" Page 127, Dawson Edition).

Socialists work to break this chain of gold, replacing even well-paid employment by voluntary co-operative free labour.

HORATIO.

WAR, CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

RECENTLY two young soldiers were convicted at Berkshire Assizes of robbery with violence. Instead of sentencing them straight away the judge gave them a choice—volunteer "unconditionally" for Korea or go to gaol. After they had a night to think it over their counsel told the judge: "They are eager to take advantage of your lordship's leniency, and volunteer for overseas service."

An editorial in the *Daily Mirror* (9th May) strongly criticised the judge's action. The *Mirror* asks how the choice of the convicted men could be unconditional in such circumstances. But there are other aspects of the matter that should be brought out, and the main theme of the editorial (An Insult to the Army) is of little consequence compared to the deeper questions concerning the cause of crime and war in our present society.

The comments of the judge (Mr. Justice Hilbery) are indicative of the conventional attitude to crime. "You have been convicted of a very grave crime. When you robbed and attacked as you did each was not showing his true nature. Each of you is a better fellow than that. See active service and turn yourselves into men of courage."

From this it would appear that when people rob and attack others *without the sanction of the law* they are not showing their "true nature." If, on the other hand, they take part in organised attack and robbery against other nations (for what else is war?) then they are turned into "men of courage."

The *Daily Mirror* believes that the men risking life in Korea are undertaking a high and honourable duty, and that it is not for courts to confuse military service with crime and punishment. In extenuation of the courts it should be pointed out that in the circumstances the confusion is pardonable. "War crime" is a name given, by the nation in a position to inflict punishment, to certain of the "military services" performed by the forces of other nations. And the military authorities themselves make it harder to see the dividing line when they treat as a criminal the conscript who is unwilling

to fight by putting him in gaol.

Under the heading, "R.A.F. is Training Burglars," the *Daily Mirror* previously printed (18th March) a report of a case of two airmen who broke into a house after drinking. Their officer told the magistrates: "If you train a man 5½ days a week to break into houses and to create disturbances on airfields, it is fair to expect that he might be inclined to put his training to the test when he is in drink." Further comment is perhaps unnecessary, except that such cases do little to dispel the confusion of organised burglary "in the national interest" with ordinary private enterprise burglary.

As a sidelight on the majesty of the law, however, it should be noted that the officer successfully pleaded that the airmen should not be gaoled, as they had good service records and the R.A.F. was short of such men. They were conditionally discharged. Possibly the magistrates considered that it would be a pity to send men who were doing such sterling work to the already overcrowded gaols when there are much more dangerous citizens at large. For example, two girls who signed "Mrs." instead of "Miss" in a hotel register were recently sentenced to a month's imprisonment. True, the sentences were later remitted, but that they should have been imposed in the first place shows that the law is administered in accordance with a standard of values that is more concerned with the sanctity of a property institution (legalised marriage) than with the protection of human life.

The Socialist views the problems of crime and war as inseparable from Capitalism itself. A vicious and competitive economic system breeds vicious and anti-social behaviour. A system based on a community of interests instead of on an antagonism will be conducive to co-operative behaviour and not, as at present, place obstacles in its way. Only with the establishment of such a system will wars and crime lose their purpose and hence their existence.

STAN.

SNOBBERY

DO you want a smart and attractive "mother" for the evening? If so, there is a London model agency which will supply you with "escorts for all occasions"; and this includes "mothers" as chaperons—at two guineas a night! Or would you like to adopt an elephant at the Zoo for a pound a week? You can't take the elephant home with you, but you can have your name inscribed on the cage. Perhaps you would like your favourite cigarettes monogrammed for 24s. a hundred; or maybe, you'd like to take lessons at a swank dancing salon, in court manners—how to curtsy and open and shut doors in the correct way. Cost? Anything from a guinea upwards. Remember, you might meet a real live duke one day, and if you haven't learnt to curtsy the right way you will be in the cart. You can also hire a butler for an evening's booze-up (sorry, cocktail party); and if you are going to have dinner you can hire a cook, a kitchen full of waiters and flunkies—and all the silver and gold plate. . . .

These are just a few of the things that our "betters" and aspiring betters get up to, according to *The Weekly Overseas Mail* (April 23rd-27th, 1953). But it is not only the rich and not-so-rich who are smitten by this disease of snobbery. How many workers are there living in sweet suburbia who spend their lives trying to "keep up with the Joneses"? How many clerks and white-collar workers, earning about eight or nine pounds a week, are there who pretend that they belong to the "middle-class"? How many workers are there

with T.V. aerials above "their" houses—and no television sets inside? How many young fellows kid their girl friends that they have got "good" jobs, and then have to admit, after they are married, that their jobs are not so good, after all? How many young couples are there who say that they don't like kids, but are not prepared to admit that they cannot afford to have children?

The world of to-day is a world of make-believe. Where the cash nexus and "getting on" is the "thing," both workers and capitalists are forced to put on a show; where the vast majority of mankind live in perpetual poverty, insecurity, worry—yes, and loneliness—people are forced to pretend that things are not so bad as they are. If you are wealthy, but your relations or friends are wealthier, then you have to hire a butler, a cook and flunkies—and the gold plate, for the evening party; if you are a worker you have to pretend you've got a television set or you own a house—even if its mortgaged to a building society.

Whilst this system—which we in the Socialist Party call capitalism—continues, people, both rich and poor, will continue this snobbery, pretence and make-believe. Unfortunately, most people do not yet see that only by getting rid of the existing social system and replacing it by a sane one, based on co-operation, equality and common ownership, will they not only get rid of the evils of poverty and insecurity, but also that of snobbery and pretence.

PETER E. NEWELL.

HOLDING THE BABY

THE Capitalist class own the means and instruments for producing society's needs. The working class must sell their ability to work to the capitalist class for wages which are often not sufficient to keep them according to the conventional standard of living. Many working-class women—unmarried mothers, widowed and deserted mothers, mothers whose husbands are disabled or whose husbands haven't a large enough wage to support the family, are forced to take a job to augment their income and send their children to day nurseries.

Remarking on such cases, the "Economist" (April 4th, 1953), wrote:—

"The cost per head of keeping a child in a day nursery varies from thirty-five shillings a week to five pounds, according to staffing ratios and amenities. The average wage of adult working women is just under four pounds ten shillings a week. As a matter of plain arithmetic, this means that full cost of the productive services of a working woman who sends her children to a day nursery may easily be both her actual wage, paid by the employer, and an equal amount paid through the local authority that looks after her children. Where several children must be cared for, the full cost may be several times the value of the product—a wildly uneconomical transaction. Where nursery costs are highest it would pay, hands down, to give the mother of two or more children, her full market wage, plus a substantial bonus,

simply to mind her babies at home. That normally gratuitous job turns out, when actually priced on the market, to be more valuable than most other occupations open to those doing it."

"This hard-headed arithmetical conclusion does not translate easily into practical policy. Not even the wildest speculations of welfare Utopians have included a universal payment to mothers of the market value of their work as child-minders. There might be a case for making such payments, as an alternative to the provision of day nurseries, only to those women who would suffer special hardships if they could not go out to work—to widowed or deserted or unmarried mothers, or to wives of disabled husbands. But an economic payment to such people would make them better off than many normal wives dependent on a breadwinner's earnings.

"The problem must in fact continue to be fudged rather than solved."

No doubt this appears a very ridiculous situation to the "Economist," the capitalist class and those who think like them—in terms of exchange value and profit and loss. But the capitalist class are not likely to endorse the obvious solution. Free the working class from the need to sell their labour power to live—a job that can only be done by the workers themselves—by making the means and instrument of production the common property of all.

J. T.

ISLINGTON MEETING

at
ISLINGTON CENTRAL LIBRARY
HOLLOWAY ROAD, N.7
(2 minutes from Highbury & Holloway Tube Station)
On Wednesday, 17th June, at 8 p.m.
"The Sordid Story in Kenya—20th Century Empire Building"
Speaker—C. May

LEWISHAM MEETING

at Co-op Hall (Room 1), Davenport Road,
Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6
On Monday, 15th June, at 8 p.m.
"Why Prices are High"
E. Hardy

DEBATE WITH LIBERAL

at
SALISBURY RD. SCHOOL, MANOR PARK, E.12
On Thursday, June 4th, at 8 p.m.
For S.P.G.B.—W. KERR
For YOUNG LIBERAL ASSOCIATION—
H. POLLARD, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for
Ilford North.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box
1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box
751, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32,
Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire. Sec. c/o 29,
Lincoln Ave., Belfast, N. Ireland.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O.
Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED
STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1,
Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and
other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

SOCIALISM AND QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

We have now prepared a pamphlet under the
above title which we are sending to the printer.
Unfortunately we have no money in hand at the
moment to meet the cost. Will members and sym-
pathisers send us what donations they can immediately
so that we can pay for deliveries of the pamphlet as
they come. It will be a pity if we cannot have this
pamphlet on sale for the summer propaganda season.

The question is urgent so send us money as quickly
as you can.

1953 SUMMER SCHOOL

A week-end school will be held at Treetops Holiday
Camp, Farley Green, near Guildford on Saturday and
Sunday, June 20th and 21st.

Total charge including accommodation £1. Will all
who wish to attend please write to J. Darcy at S.P.G.B.,
52 Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Reading

Will members and sympathisers interested in
forming a group in this district please write to J. A.
O'Brien, 31, Frensham Green, Shinfield Rise, Reading.

Transport Workers

Will Party members employed by the L.T.E.,
interested in co-operating to extend Socialist propa-
ganda amongst transport workers, please get in touch
with Frank P. Dunne, 17, St. Mary's Grove, Canonbury,
N.1.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN JUNE

Mondays: Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.
Fridays: Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.
Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
Hyde Park, 6 p.m.
Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.
White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11 a.m.
East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Exmouth Market.
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.
Thursdays: Tower Hill.
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

CROYDON BRANCH

The following lectures will be given at 8 p.m. at
RUSKIN HOUSE, Wellesley Rd., Croydon (near W.
Croydon Stn.).

May 27th V. Phillips, "Wat Tyler and the Feudal
System."

June 10th Michael, "The Role of the State."

June 24th R. McLaughlin, "Any questions on
Socialism."

July 8th T. Lord, "Health and the Socialist case."

July 22nd H. Jarvis, "What Socialists should know
about the Bible."

Aug. 5th G. Brynolf, "Russian Capitalism."

Aug. 19th H. Jarvis, "Capitalism and Food."

Sept. 2nd, "An open Forum on Trade Unions."

You and your friends are cordially invited.

TO MEMBERS AND SYMPATHISERS

Will members and sympathisers interested in the
formation of a branch of the Party in the Hammersmith
district please communicate with B. Flitter, 17 Chiswick
Village, W.4.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—1st and 3rd Tuesdays each month at 7.15 p.m., at Kingsley Hall, Old Market Street, Bristol. Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 3rd and 17th June. 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 7 Paradise Street, Rugby.

SWANSEA.—D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murtion Gower, Swansea.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hallard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.15.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Peters London Road, Wickford. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at Digbeth Institute. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. First and third Thursdays in June (4th and 18th), Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., E. M. P. Hirst, 35, Addington Square, S.E.5.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 55, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Ecceles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 1, Gaskell Road, Ecceles. Secretary, F. Lea. Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Aikenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, June 1st, 15th and 29th at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to A. Iveney, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to Secretary, 22, Sanderstead Avenue, N.W.2.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. P. Hart, 54, Ashdale House, N.4.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 446, Staines Road, Twickenham. Branch meets Thursdays at 7.30 p.m., at the above address. Tel. Feltham 4006.

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets Tuesdays, 9th and 23rd June, at 7.45 p.m., Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate. Sec. J. M. Breakley, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 587 Vol. 49 July, 1953

TOBACCO WORKERS'
DILEMMA

HUMAN NATURE AND
SOCIALISM

SUEZ CANAL IN WORLD
AFFAIRS

FUTURE OF LEISURE

ABOUT BOOKS

THE PASSING SHOW

SLINGS AND ARROWS

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

Portrait of a Monopoly

The British Match Industry

"THE ARRANGEMENTS we have described above form a complete and integrated monopoly . . . and the system as a whole operates, and is likely to operate, against the public interest as respects the supply both of matches and of match-making machinery."

In these forthright terms the Monopolies Commission sums up its report on the British match industry, the sixth and latest of its investigations into restrictive practices in the United Kingdom.

The information now made public by the Commission throws revealing light on the way monopolies develop and operate, and on how they are maintained. It shows also what profitable ventures they can be for those capitalists able to form them and keep them going successfully. Drawing on the Commission's report, and using it to illustrate the practices common to all monopolies, let us examine the monopoly that has grown up inside the British match industry.

The Foundations of Monopoly

The first objective of any company seeking to carve out a monopoly must be to obtain control over the production and distribution of the particular commodity it is interested in. It must make itself, for all practical purposes, the only firm in the industry. In the British match industry, one company has succeeded in doing this.

This company is the British Match Corporation, otherwise known as B.M.C. Formed in 1927 as a holding company from the amalgamation of Bryant and May (and its subsidiaries) with Masters, Ltd., it is today responsible for almost the whole of the British home output of matches—about two-thirds of total consumption.

Linked with B.M.C. is another monopoly—the Swedish Match Company. Older readers may remember it in connection with the activities of Ivar Kreuger, the Swedish millionaire—speculator. It is this combine, with ramifications throughout the world, that provides the remainder of the matches required in the U.K. These imports, it should be noted, are in turn controlled and distributed in this country by B.M.C. Taking home production and imports together, it is therefore obvious that B.M.C. is in almost complete control of the British market; for the mathematically-minded, the exact proportion is 92 per cent. These figures show clearly that the essential foundation of a monopoly—a stranglehold on output and distribution—has been most successfully obtained by B.M.C.

Also to be noted is the fact that Swedish Match, with 30 per cent. of the Ordinary shares in B.M.C., is actually its largest single shareholder. With this voting power behind it, it can of course wield considerable influence should the need ever arise.

Preserving a Monopoly

It is difficult enough to succeed in establishing a monopoly: it is even more difficult to maintain it and keep it thriving.

First and foremost, there must always be a careful watch for possible rivals. These must be rooted out quickly and dealt with ruthlessly. The record shows B.M.C. and Swedish Match to have been adept at this, and it is most interesting to see how both partners have played their part in dealing with the threats of competition that have arisen from time to time.

On the home front, B.M.C. has made use of two methods, both very simple and both very effective. The first has been to undersell its competitors by offering cheaper brands of imported matches at reduced prices in selected areas whilst keeping the general level of its prices unchanged. In this way it has succeeded in keeping down competition at very little cost to itself. The second and perhaps even better method has been to charge its competitors high prices for essential raw materials, of which it again happens to be the sole controller. On this particular point the Commission found that B.M.C. was charging its competitors 77 per cent. more for certain chemicals than its own subsidiaries.

The part played by Swedish Match has been just as effective, by virtue of the fact that in its turn it has a monopoly over the machinery used in match-making. This has been more than enough to keep potential large-scale competition in check, as the following will show.

In its report the Commission mentions that two attempts have been made by other firms to start manufacturing matches on a large scale. The first of these was the Co-operative Wholesale Society, which in 1932 thought of setting up its own factory. In the subsequent negotiations in which Bryant and May became involved, the Society was actually offered some shares and Debenture stock in B.M.C. This offer was not taken up, and in 1936 the Society came to a definite decision to begin the manufacture of matches on its own account. Its efforts in this direction were completely unsuccessful as it found itself unable to obtain the necessary machinery. In 1938 it approached Bryant and May for permission to use certain machinery the rights in which, it understood, were held by that firm. The reply, which can hardly have been unexpected, was: "we hardly think you can expect us to assist you to obtain machinery which is destined to replace some, at least, of the goods we have hitherto supplied to the Societies." Instead they proposed a deal between the Society and one of their subsidiaries, whereby profits would be divided between the two. This proposal was rejected by the Society, and it made a further attempt to get the necessary machinery. It was again unsuccessful.

Yet another concern tried for five years prior to 1934 to start manufacture on a commercial scale, again without success. In this year a most remarkable letter

was sent to B.M.C. from the President of the Diamond Match Company of America (he was also a director of B.M.C. and of Bryant and May) reporting that he had arranged for some "friends" to employ an American technical expert who happened to be already under contract to this concern. The agreement reached with this expert included an understanding that he would "tactfully and earnestly work to discourage" the concern. His "consideration" for this agreement was \$600 per month, to which Diamond had agreed to contribute one third, and the letter asked B.M.C. to make a contribution. This letter is so revealing of what goes on behind the scenes where monopolies are concerned that it is worth reproducing in full:—

"I have arranged to have friends employ Mr. . . . on some experimental work that has nothing whatever to do with the British Match Industry and will not affect to the slightest degree any of the operations abroad in which you are interested. My friends have had to reach a definite understanding and make a confidential agreement with [Mr. . . .], which under no condition must be given publicity either here or in Britain. They have obligated themselves to pay him \$600.00 per month. It is understood that [Mr. . . .] may be called from the United States to work for . . . Ltd. [an English company], and if he is called to go to England to do work for these people with whom he has a prior contract, he will not be paid by my friends. It has also been agreed, however, that he will tactfully and earnestly work to discourage . . . Ltd., that he will do nothing to get out of his contract with [. . . Ltd.] which would encourage them to hire some other expert or have machines made for them elsewhere. If he succeeds in discouraging [. . . Ltd.] and in getting out of his obligation to these people, then he will work exclusively for my friends for a period of three years and during this period of time will not do any outside work for any other interest whatsoever. [Mr. . . .] has told my friends that he personally is tired of the English company, who have been continuously deceiving him, putting him off, and have been unable to date to get responsible people on your side to go forward with matters as promised and outlined. [Mr. . . .] thinks that in the near future that he will be able to drop all connections with [. . . Ltd.] and that [. . . Ltd.] will cease to exist as a living match producing possibility.

"In confidence, permit me to say that of this \$600.00 my Company will contribute one-third of this monthly amount just so long as [Mr. . . .] does no work whatsoever for [. . . Ltd.] or any company interested in match making in Britain or Canada. Do you care to make any contribution in this matter?"—*Report*, page 120.

The result of this appeal was that B.M.C. also agreed to make a contribution of one-third. It continued making regular monthly payments until May, 1943, by which time, presumably, no further trouble was to be expected from the concern in question.

The Rewards of Monopoly

Finally we come to consider the rewards of monopoly. They are indeed substantial and worth all the effort put in to obtain them. On the manufacturing side, for example, Bryant and May's profit before the war averaged 35 per cent. annually, and that of its main subsidiary (Moreland) 45 per cent. The average profit of Masters was about 26 per cent. In 1950, according to the Commission's calculations, Bryant and May's profit was 16 per cent., Moreland's 34 per cent., and Masters' 30 per cent., the lower figures reflecting the operation of Government price control. On the import side, where distribution only is involved, pre-war profits averaged 10 per cent. dropping to 4½ per cent. in 1950.

The Commission's strictures on B.M.C.'s costs and profits were most severe:

"The profit on sales of all three B.M.C. manufactures whose costs were examined was very high before the introduction of statutory price control, and the profit of the two lower cost manufacturers was still very high, having regard to the relative slight trading risk. B.M.C. has told us that it is its policy to make as much profit as it can, and that in its view competition insures that the prices charged are fair. Since it is clear that B.M.C. has taken all possible steps to eliminate competition, with marked success, and there is, in our opinion, virtually no competition in this trade, this safeguard is illusory, and it is not surprising that profits have been high.

"We conclude that there is scope for the reduction of both costs and profits of B.M.C. and that it is unlikely that either would have remained as high as they have if there had been any effective competition."

The Commission's Remedy

The remedy put forward by the Commission is, not unexpectedly, a dose of State intervention. Some of its members, however, disagree on the strength of the dose to be administered. Three of them, who state their views in a minority report, are all for a more "drastic" remedy than that prescribed by the other members of the Commission. This, they suggest, should take the form of a Government buying agency, armed with exclusive powers to buy all matches, whether home-produced or imported. In effect, they seek to oppose a monopoly seller with a monopoly buyer.

The majority of the Commission, however, are not impressed by this "drastic remedy." In their opinion, it would lead to still greater rigidity in the trade and might not result in cheaper matches anyway. This latter observation is certainly borne out by the results of State interference so far, and should be particularly noted by Labourites who so airily assume that State-control reduces prices. The majority's preference is for a more thorough system of price-control on the part of the Government. This, they themselves admit, is only a partial remedy, and they agree that it would leave the present market-sharing arrangements between B.M.C.

and Swedish match untouched.

Nobody can be very impressed with either of these remedies, not even the most ardent supporter of capitalism judging all issues by the direct and immediate effect they have on his pocket.

The Real Remedy

The Commission's report is now with the Government, and it will be interesting to see what the Tory defenders of private enterprise and free competition finally decide to do with it. As for the Labour Party, hard up for policy and feeling rather out of things, they will probably do their best to blow it up to be something of much greater importance than it actually is.

For our part, we would make just one point. Monopoly is nothing new to capitalism; indeed it is inseparable from it. It is the logical outcome of the drive for profit, and experience has shown all over the capitalist world that as fast as one monopoly has been suppressed, another springs up elsewhere. The history of "trust-busting" in the United States is a perfect example of this. The remedy of bringing in the State does not put an end to monopoly; all it does is to replace private monopoly by the monopoly of the State. Whatever the advantages a State monopoly may have for the capitalist class, it is nothing for the working-class to get excited about. They should have had enough experience of the workings of State control by now to realise this.

Monopolies will disappear only when capitalism disappears. It is not monopoly, but capitalism, that is the issue. Socialism, the real remedy, will do away with both. When, as seems likely before long, the Labour and Conservative Parties create yet another storm in a teacup over what is to be done with the British match industry, workers should remember this. S.H.

SLINGS AND ARROWS

"Be it ever so humble . . ."

Scuffers and cynics sneer when they hear Bishops and sanctimonious politicians talk about the sanctity of the home and the family as the foundation of Christian civilisation. But that they are sincere cannot be doubted even by the most disbelieving. Why else would they live in such comfortable circumstances? Obviously because they believe that if the foundation is right the rest of the edifice must follow suit. Thus, true to their principles and beliefs, Archbishops live in Palaces, politicians in mansions and Stately Homes, Queen in Castles (two), Palaces (three), and Stately Home (one), and dogs, as is fitting and proper, in kennels.

Since there are not sufficient mansions, palaces and castles to go round, we content ourselves with flats, Nissen huts and prefabs. "Mid pleasures and palaces," wrote a Victorian songster, "though we may roam, Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home." Had he been alive to-day he might have added the words "even if it's only a dog kennel."

The *New Statesman* publishes each week a feature entitled "This England" consisting of extracts from newspapers submitted by readers, which show the

lighter and more humorous and eccentric side of what is known as the "British character." In its issue of the 13th June, 1953, the *New Statesman* published in this feature the following extract from the *Times*:—

"For a year a husband and wife have lived in a wooden dog kennel seven feet long by five feet wide at Ystradmynach, Glamorgan. The kennel is one of four in the corner of a disused allotment. Three are occupied by dogs and the fourth by Mrs. Dorothy May Norman and her husband, an engineer at a local power station."

Reference to the *Times* showed that far from them being examples of British eccentricity this unfortunate couple lived in a kennel from sheer necessity, and not from choice. To journalists fond of writing about the glories of the welfare state and with comfortable homes in Hampstead or Bloomsbury and well appointed offices in High Holborn, the idea of people living in a dog kennel may be a joke. But each to his taste. Perhaps the juxtaposition of this item with articles by Mr. John Strachey showing where Marx was wrong, and that it was possible by legislation and "counterpressure" to offset the evils that Marx denounced, may have given them cause for laughter which escape us.

According to the *Times*, notice to quit has been

served on this couple and soon they will have nowhere to live, not even a dog kennel. But perhaps one of the Bishops or politicians may invite them to share their homes till further arrangements can be made, and thus keep the foundation of our Christian Civilisation in being.

Three Cheers for the Red, White and Blue

Those, who since the last war have watched the manner in which British capitalism has become almost a colonial dependency under the hegemony of the United States, might well expect that our foremost leaders would have objected and raised some form of protest. Instead, most of them have actually supported dependence on America. There was no one to demand the return of independence to this once mighty Power, until Coronation Day, when appropriately enough the following clarion call was issued:—

"How the Yankees now parading London's streets must laugh when they see multitudes of Union Jacks. It is Britain's national flag. Once it was meant to symbolise our power and independence. To-day the Yankees determine British policy.

"THEY dominate our Army, Navy and Air Force. "THEY tell us with whom we may trade and with whom we may not trade.

"THEY cause our lads to be killed in their war in Korea. . . . If those in Westminster Abbey were real patriots they would help to send every Yankee back home. . . ."

Who is this leader who on Coronation day tried to imbue the nation with a sense of patriotism and national independence? None other than that staunch defender of the Union Jack, that heir to the traditions of Palmerston, Wellington, Drake and Raleigh, that paragon of patriotism, Mr. Harry Pollitt. There are of course several shortcomings in this appeal, but one cannot have everything. Suffice it that the clarion call has been made, and if Harry does not tell us what to do with "our" Army, Navy and Airforce, when the Americans are made to hand them back; well, we must find out for ourselves. And as for being allowed to trade with whom we please, that would be wonderful, except that we can't quite think of anything we have worth trading. The most interesting feature of Pollitt's

call to action, is, of course, the use of the collective pronoun. It serves to remind us of what "we" have lost by our dependence on the Americans.

In the first Elizabethan era, its most famous writer wrote a play in which a clarion call appears which has rallied Britons for three centuries, and has immortalised the hero who uttered it. Is it too much to ask that some playwright of the present Elizabethan era will do the same by Harry Pollitt? We hope not, and we feel sure that when that call is heard throughout our land there will be none who will not feel uplifted. "Cry, God for Harry, England and St. Joe!"

Anti-Americanism

There is a more sinister aspect to the grotesque posturings of Harry Pollitt and the Communist Party. Since the erstwhile Allies quarrelled over the postwar settlement, the Communist Party has indulged in stirring up anti-American prejudices. They refer to "Yank" in almost the same manner as Fascists refer to "Yids." Should some unfortunate girl be assaulted by an American soldier, then it is headlined in the *Daily Worker*. But should Americans give large contributions to flood relief funds then one requires a microscope to find any reference to it. In their spoken propaganda they harp on this anti-yank theme with the same assiduity as Mosley once tried to work up prejudice against Jews.

There is no baseness from which the Communist Party will shrink in its effort to follow in the footsteps of their masters in the Kremlin. But they had better be careful. Not for the first time, Moscow might suddenly change policy, catching Harry Pollitt and his friends on the wrong foot, again not for the first time. Then, in their efforts to catch up with the change they might trip and break their political necks. An event which would be unmentioned by all who know the Communist Party for what it is.

It was said of Shakespeare that "he touched nothing he did not adorn." Of Mr. Pollitt and his Party it might truly be said that they touch nothing they do not degrade.

S.A.

THE PASSING SHOW

Indo-China

Last month this column examined recent events in Indo-China from the standpoint of the relations between France and her three Indo-Chinese colonies, which are now called "Associated States." This month it may be of interest to investigate the manoeuvres between France and the United States which arose from the same events—the advance of the Viet-Minh into Laos and their subsequent partial retreat. As against the native ruling class in Indo-China, the French Government was able to play the part of spider; but in relation to the United States, the French rulers were forced to fill the humbler role of fly.

Keep Out: Private Property

Even before the Viet-Minh moved into Laos, the American stand was clear. Mr. Adlai Stevenson, who

although he was defeated in the Presidential election spoke for the entire American ruling class in this matter, said in Saigon that the United States would continue its "indispensable aid to the Associated States so that they should be able to take their place among the independent nations of the free world"; and he added that "the United States was following with attention the first steps of the Viet Nam Government towards democracy" (*The Times*, 8-4-53; the references that follow unless otherwise indicated, are also to *The Times*). In other words, Mr. Stevenson wanted the Associated States to free themselves from the suzerainty of the French—with the result that the extension of American economic and political influence in that part of South-East Asia would become much easier.

The French ruling class understands quite well the American intention; and when Laos was invaded by the

Viet-Minh, and the Laos Government issued a strong appeal for help "to the United Nations, to the allied countries, and to the free peoples." The French Government followed this up with a much more moderate statement, addressed only "to the free peoples" (16-4-53). It seemed that the Laos Government would not have objected to the landing of American armed forces; but the French statement was carefully framed to exclude the possibility of the Americans turning Indo-China into another Korea, since that would lead inevitably to the transfer of Indo-China from the French to the American sphere of influence. As *The Times* delicately put it, "it would almost certainly loosen the ties binding France to the Associated States of the French Union" (29-4-53).

I took a harp to a party

The United States was not at all reticent about offering its "help." Mr. Dulles, the American Secretary of State, went to Paris and urged the French Ministers to bring the "aggression" in Laos before the United Nations (29-4-53). Back in Washington, he announced publicly—and, no doubt he hoped, temptingly—that the Administration was considering channeling new military assistance to the French-led forces in Laos (30-4-53). A few days later Mr. Dulles sent along two or three dozen American transport planes in Indo-China, as an earnest of the "assistance" the French would get if they only agreed to internationalise the war in Indo-China (4-5-53).

But nobody asked me to play

The days went past, and the French made no move to call in the United Nations (which, in the present state of world power, means the United States). The only overt reply to these repeated American offers and gestures was a speech in Saigon by M. Letourneau, the French Minister for the Associated States, who said that "France was determined not to abandon any of the states associated with her" (6-5-53). While these words were obviously intended first for the consideration of any of the Associated States which might feel tempted to get out of step, their significance was presumably not lost in Washington. This speech, in fact, may have shown the American Government that this particular tack was hopeless. Laos itself could not appeal to the United Nations because it was not a member; France clearly was not going to; but there was always the chance that the Americans might get a foothold yet in Indo-China by means of Siam.

Now Siam is as much within America's sphere of influence as is Korea. It is ruled by a military junta, which has the active support of the Americans (notwithstanding their propaganda about "democracy" and "freedom"). As *The Times* said recently, "the obvious effect of American aid has been to strengthen the military oligarchy. It gains extra support with the arrival of every American carbine. . . . The foundations of political power are the military and police barracks of Bangkok and not the village polling booths" (30-4-53).

So I took the darned thing away

"Faced with French hesitations" said *The Times* in a leading article, the United States Administration seems to hope that Siam—next door to Laos—may call

attention to a state of affairs likely to endanger the peace outside Indo-China" (11-5-53). But the same article went on to warn against such a step. "There are many member States which would make this an excuse for all the old attacks on the colonial system rather than an opportunity for dispassionate investigation." And it is true that there is nothing more tiresome than bringing up your enemies' faults for discussion, only to find that those present prefer to concentrate on your own shortcomings. However, the Americans went ahead. Ten days later the Siamese Ambassador in Washington announced that his Government intended formally to complain to the United Nations Security Council about the invasion of Laos (21-5-53).

Nevertheless, it seems that for once the American Government has missed the boat. With the delay caused by the intransigence of the French, the Viet-Minh have had time to withdraw most of their forces from Laos, and it seems improbable now that the Americans will be given the opportunity to come to the "assistance" of the French in Indo-China even if the Siamese complaint is favourably received.

May Day, past and present

For years, in this country and abroad, the Social Democrats used May Day as an opportunity to advocate their remedy for the ills of society—state ownership of industry. May Day was often followed by a month of exceptional working class activity, including strikes, in which Social Democrats were prominent. Now, in a number of industries in France, the Social Democrats have had their way, and nationalisation has come. But what change has there been? The labourites in France still use May Day to proclaim the virtues of state-industry; and then, as trade union leaders, they bring the workers out on strike in those very industries which are now run on the system they advocate. In France this year there were five big strikes in May: in the merchant navy, on the railways, and in the gas, electricity and Paris transport undertakings (21-5-53). And all five of these industries are under what is called "public ownership"!

Since nationalised industry, with all the prestige and power of the state behind it, is stronger in disputes with the workers than private industry, all the Social Democrats have done is to change the boss's name and give him a bigger stick.

Ninepence for Ninepence

Now that half a century of legislation has established the so-called "Welfare State," none of the big parties would think of attacking it in word or deed. Family Allowances, for example, mean that the workers with large families, who formerly would have been the first to feel the pinch of low wages, and to agitate for strike action, are now to a certain extent pacified with a few extra shillings a week; and the money to pay these allowances (and the other benefits like free doctoring and the dole) comes from the workers themselves by way of national insurance contributions. Before this system was well established, however, there were some Tories who did not clearly understand it, and who were afraid that somehow the workers were going to get something for nothing. They believed Lloyd George's tendentious slogan about "Ninepence for

Fourpence" and Labour Party propaganda on the same lines. But getting something for nothing has always been the prerogative of the class which exacts surplus value; and the fear that the working class was going to usurp this age-old privilege drove the right wing of the Tory Party into panicky hostility to anything which smacked of benefits or allowances to the workers. A small section failed to recover its balance even after the Welfare State had demonstrated in practice that it certainly did not give the workers anything for nothing. The Conservative Party as a whole, while it saw how valuable the various National Insurance schemes were to the capitalist class, and while it even flooded the country with posters claiming to have thought of the whole idea first, still did not break entirely with the extremists; and the diehards could always depend on a sympathetic hearing in the Conservative papers.

Waugh on the Tories

But Mr. Evelyn Waugh's latest book, a long short-story about "welfare-weary citizens" called "Love Among the Ruins," and the review which it has drawn forth from the *Sunday Express* (31-5-53), may mark the beginning of a new development. Mr. Waugh, hitherto the arch-priest of the diehard Tories, is annoyed that the official Conservative Party has become so enamoured of the Welfare State that it is now claiming paternity; and in his novel, a forecast of the immediate future, he has Mr. Eden entering a coalition with Mr. Bevan, and he describes the "Euthanasia Department," the scheme for which was "a Tory measure designed to attract votes from the aged and mortally sick." From one Tory to another, this is a nasty crack. The irritation which a property-owner naturally feels when a worker, weary of his lot, absents himself from his task for a single day, is nothing compared to the fury aroused when the worker, still more weary, dares to absent himself from this world permanently by committing suicide. Anything which makes voluntary death easier, like euthanasia, is therefore anathema to a supporter of the capitalist system (though compulsory death is a different matter, as the history of the first two world wars shows us); and Mr. Waugh takes a serious step when he hints

that the Tory Party would be prepared to support such a scheme in order to get votes. The *Sunday Express* has therefore joined the anti-Waugh camp. It accuses Mr. Waugh of being a bore, of being grotesque and tasteless, and puts his latest effort down to premature senility.

If one may take this episode as a straw in the wind, it appears that the Conservatives, and the handful of extremists who think like Mr. Waugh, have finally parted company. The Labour Party may take comfort from the fact that they and the Tories are now at one in their support of the Welfare State.

The great attack

President Eisenhower recently gave a warning of the power that is in the hands of the American ruling class if war comes. He said:

"To-day three aircraft with modern weapons can practically duplicate the destructive power of all the 2,700 planes we unleashed in the great break-out attack from the Normandy beach-head" (21-5-53).

This statement comes with special force to those who saw after the Second World War the wreck and rubble which alone marked the sites of what had been a score of flourishing Norman towns. It seems that Socialism is no longer merely to be described in the terms of our Declaration of Principles—a society we must bring about "that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom"; with the development of the atomic bomb, the progress of society has become a race between the advent of Socialism and the advent of social suicide.

Drawing one's own conclusion

If the sun had shone on the day of the Coronation, we should not have lacked newspaper pundits and parsons to assure us that here was evidence that Heaven itself was smiling on the crowning of our glorious, slim, lovely, radiant (—plus other adjectives to taste) young Queen. As it happened, the day was cold and rainy. But so far we have neither seen nor heard any account which, from these facts, has drawn the opposite conclusion.

A.W.E.

THE FUTURE OF LEISURE

The phrase "working for a living" suggests a distinction between working and living which most people accept. But if "working occupies five or six days a week and fifty weeks a year, how much "living" is left?

That was the challenging question put to readers of the "Radio Times" some little while ago, in describing a programme on "What is Work?" The question is of particular interest to socialists, who advocate a form of society in which such a distinction between working and living (or the division of living into work and leisure) will no longer be recognised.

The present division which exists for most people between their work and their leisure is the product of historical conditions. Probably the concept of leisure as something apart from and opposed to work was unknown in societies in which there was no privileged

class. Some primitive people have no word for "work"—work is for them the expression of living. And even the class-divided Greek civilisation evolved no separate word for leisure—the word they used also meant "school."

The handicraftsman and artisan received a certain satisfaction from the work they did. They made whole articles, and used their skill and inventiveness to overcome the difficulties which arose. They were really educated by their labour. But the manufacturing division of labour under Capitalism has changed all that. A large proportion of workers are relegated to monotonous machine-minding and office routine, and few are able to gain real satisfaction from their work.

Even those who do make things that are useful to people often do not gain the pleasure of a good job well done, because of the tyranny of clocking-in,

speeding-up, and down-to-a-price quality of products. Capitalist and worker alike are dominated by the need to compete successfully with others, since failure means an end to their "living"—yet success is bought only at the price of orienting one's life to goals that are trivial and artificial instead of basic and real.

Leisure Class

The emergence of a class in society that is not compelled to participate in production coincided with the beginning of private ownership. A leisure class was the outgrowth of an early discrimination between employments, some being considered worthy ("exploit" by the males) and other unworthy (drudgery by the females).

"During the predatory culture labour comes to be associated in men's habits of thought with weakness and subjection to a master. It is therefore a mark of inferiority and, therefore, comes to be accounted unworthy of man in his best estate. By virtue of this tradition labour is felt to be debasing, and this tradition has never died out. . . . In order to gain and to hold the esteem of men it is not sufficient merely to possess wealth or power. The wealth or power must be put in evidence. . . . A life of leisure is the readiest and most conclusive evidence of pecuniary strength and, therefore, of superior force; provided always that the gentleman of leisure can live in manifest ease and comfort."—"The Theory of the Leisure Class," Veblen, p. 36-8.)

Yet the fact remains that work is the foundation of any society. Hence, the value of work to society should be its prime consideration. But because, within property society, the dominating ideas arise from people who need not toil, and because a substitute for satisfaction from work must be found for millions who know it only as an evil necessity, leisure becomes the supreme goal.

Employment is a necessity imposed upon all but a privileged few. Consequently there comes to be a divergence between the conditions of working "for a living" and the kind of life which is held out by supporters of the system as desirable. The message preached is that the end of life is idleness and enjoyment. But workers, having absorbed the message, must return to the factory or office to earn the money without which they cannot live.

Machinery of Amusement

The means of mass influence—press, cinema, radio and television—all focus attention on those aspects of our lives that have nothing to do with everyday tasks. People figure in the "news" who are notable only for having money and time to spend. The constant display of wealth and leisure as desirable ends influences the standards of those who seek an outlet to express themselves which the conditions of their work deny them.

Various factors have combined to oust the old family-gathering type of popular leisure—*doing* has given way to watching and listening. Probably the Victorian party-piece was not as happily endured as many would have us believe, nor is the advent of television the unmitigated evil that some suppose. Nevertheless, leisure has largely taken on the form of a commodity that is passively consumed rather than an experience that is actively enjoyed. As Henry Durant writes in "The Problem of Leisure":

"All forms of leisure have become commercialised, endless devices are offered to the idle person, each to be

enjoyed only on condition that he has money to pay. Without money he is condemned, unable to share in the pleasure and pastimes which press on him from all sides. But commercialisation does not merely erect a gate through which only those with the necessary fee can pass. It has a profound effect also on the nature of the fare offered. The 'machinery of amusement' is run by business men actuated by business motives. Their concern is not primarily with the character of the entertainment or amusement they provide, for it is merely the means to the end of making profits."

The ways in which leisure is spent are unavoidably influenced by the prevailing conditions of employment. Take, for example, the workers on a belt system in a factory who, in the course of their work, use only a small part of their brain capacity and nervous system. To stave off monotony their off-duty hours are mostly spent in such feverish pleasures as speedway and the more hectic forms of dancing—and their nervous systems inevitably suffer.

When work lacks interest it is either forgotten altogether on "knocking off" or else it is the subject of grumbling. It is not complimentary to be told that you can never forget your work; and those who do take their socially useless work seriously often develop boring personalities and have few interests outside their daily occupations.

Self-expression

Here we can do no more than touch upon the various ways in which people search today for something different, something outside of their own drab existence. The cinema is an obvious example that springs to mind, but there are others that are not so often considered. All the preparations, the plans, the excitements and the ballyhoo that surrounded the recent Coronation surely demonstrate the emptiness of most people's everyday lives. And what of the weekly football pool coupon that excites study and comment out of all proportion to its importance? The punters are members of a Happy Circle, so they are told—and the atmosphere of mock geniality is shattered only when a court action is brought over winnings. Then it is admitted that the "Happy Circle" is just an advertising circular.

Some imagine that the socialist revolution either will or ought to bring a state of affairs where all will spend their leisure as the wealthy do now. Certainly the atmosphere in which they move is one to which the adjective "drab" hardly applies. Yet if you ask those who minister to the "needs" of the élite whether the latter really have the control over their environment that is the mark of free men, then the answer may surprise you. According to one writer, for instance, the rich take up gambling more or less because they are driven to it—they find they are "out of it" unless they join in roulette or whatever happens to be in vogue. And so they drift from one aimless diversion to another . . .

Whilst the first onset of mechanisation has taken all the joy from work, it may be predicted that its final result will be to return to human activities a freedom that is absent today. Man will then possess the machines and use them selectively, thus restoring dignity to all human occupations. Labour, in Marx's words, will be not merely a means to live, but itself the primary necessity of life.

S.R.P.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

JULY,



1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

TOBACCO WORKERS' DILEMMA

AT the annual conference of the Tobacco Workers' Union, held in London in June, the delegates were discussing unemployment which has recently increased in the industry. The president of the Union, Mr. D. G. Bowry, drew attention to a problem affecting tobacco workers.

"In a number of our factories we have had to endure short time. We have seen the elimination of certain smaller manufacturers with certain dismissals of staff. Yet we are told that if we are to survive we must produce more. It seems to me that we in our industry are tossing up with a double-headed penny. If we produce more we are faced with redundancy, and if we produce less we are faced with the same medicine."—(*Manchester Guardian*, 12th June, 1953.)

The point was neatly put; but Mr. Bowry did not state the problem fully and did not offer a solution.

Stating the problem fully he would have included all industries everywhere, not merely the tobacco industry in this country. He would not have called the factories "ours," for in no country do the factories belong to the workers or to the community as a whole; in all countries all industries, including those run on nationalised capitalist lines, are run for profit not solely for use.

Consequently it is all workers, in all countries, who are tossing up with the double-headed penny. If they produce too little they get the sack; if they produce too much they work some of their number out of their jobs. And if they follow a happy mean their fate is just the same whenever an industry (or all industries) suffers from one of capitalism's chaotic phases of "overproduction" in relation to the market as did textiles last year. Nowhere at all are the workers free from poverty and safe against insecurity.

This is not what the workers are told. All governments and employers, and many labour leaders, tell the workers that if they produce more they will be better

off and will be safeguarding themselves against unemployment.

As it happened, a day or two after the Tobacco Workers' conference the *Sunday Express* (14 June) published an article by Dr. Ludwig Erhard, Minister for Economic Affairs in the West German government. In it Dr. Erhard offered to Britain and the British workers the advice he offers to the workers in Germany. Recently, "travelling in his fast Mercedes car he went round the Ruhr urging more steel production," and he would tell the British workers:—

"It is no use for a working man to say, 'I'm safe whether I work hard or not.' It is no use saying: 'I won't go without food even if I'm not worth a job' . . . But I would also add this: If you work hard you should eat well. If you eat well, you will work."

Dr. Erhard thinks that British industry has nothing to fear from German competition as "there is room in the world for both British and German exports." He notes just one difference between Britain and Germany: "our men work harder and faster."

But one thing Dr. Erhard forgot to mention is that in West Germany there were at the end of March 1,392,870 registered unemployed!

So far what he has said could only strengthen Mr. Bowry in his conviction that we live in a hard, cruel world, for we have not yet attended to the remark he made at the end of his speech, that he would be "quite happy to hear the solution to this dilemma."

We are quite happy to supply the solution though surprised that among those tobacco workers there was nobody able to do so on the spot.

The dilemma glimpsed by Mr. Bowry is just an aspect, an inevitable one, of capitalism. And the only cure for capitalism is Socialism.

If, as so often happens, the tobacco workers hear the solution and then dismiss it from their minds on the ground that Socialism calls for a radical change of thought and action and is therefore difficult to grasp and endorse, they should remember that that difficulty will be as nothing compared with the miseries of poverty, unemployment and war they will undoubtedly suffer if they go on hoping that social reforms and Labour Governments and nationalised capitalism will get them out of the mess they are in.

SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Please send SOCIALIST STANDARD for 12 months (6 months, 2/9) for which 5/6 is enclosed.

Name
(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

.....
(State if renewal or new subscriber.)

ABOUT BOOKS

WHEN Plato, Aristotle and others of their day spoke about Greece and the Greeks, they did not include the slaves; when historians of the 18th and 19th centuries wrote about Americans, they gave no heed to the negro slaves. Likewise today, when there is so much blather about the Elizabethan age, our super-patriots and political quacks refer only to the upper crust of the late 16th century society, not to the Toms, Dicks and Harrys who had to strive to earn a meagre living by the sweat of their brows. Not only are the humble workers not mentioned, they are not even considered. A picture of prosperity and regal pageantry is painted against a background of period architecture and costume, with farthingales, ruffs and fancy pants much in evidence. To have painted against a background of masses of hungry, oppressed serfs and workers would have spoiled the colourful effect, and destroyed the object of the painting.

We Socialists are inoculated against this "Elizabethan fever," but living daily in the very heart of the epidemic it is hard to avoid becoming slightly infected. So we find ourselves pulling books from the bookshelves and reading about the age of Elizabeth I. Some most illuminating reading we can assure you.

We passed over the history books that deal with such world-shattering events as the gallantry of Sir Walter Raleigh in spreading his cloak over a mud puddle for his queen; the cool, casual courage of Sir Francis Drake, finishing his game of bowls whilst the Spanish Armada was in sight, and the heart-flutterings and hand-holdings of Good Queen Bess and her noble lovers. We selected books that told of the domestic tragedy of a certain Joan Wynstone who, on February 6th, 1575, was whipped and branded as a vagabond, on July 26th was saved from being hanged by being set to service to her husband, and on October 3rd, having run away from the husband, was caught and hanged. We browsed into books that gave records of the rates of wages paid and the cost of living during the years of the reign of Elizabeth I. And we read how many a noble lord, whose descendants were privileged to be inside Westminster Abbey on June 2nd this year, laid the foundations of the family fortunes by indulging in practices that would have brought a blush of shame to the cheek of an 18th century highwayman, and by investing in schemes that to this day give off a strong smell of working class blood and sweat.

For the benefit of anyone who may wish to follow our example and try to get a true picture of the conditions of life for the vast majority of people during the reign of Elizabeth I, we will list a few books.

First there is a book that is completely lacking in sensational writing but crammed from cover to cover with facts and figures of rates of pay for workers in various trades in different parts of the country at different times of the year, together with details of the cost of necessary commodities, fluctuations in price with their causes, and comparative figures with other periods. It will not be possible to buy this book now-a-days but it can be obtained from public libraries. It is entitled, "Six Centuries of Work and Wages" by Professor

James E. Thorold Rogers, M.P. The book was originally published by Swan Sonnenschein and Co., Ltd., but there have been many editions. It has, as its subtitle, "The History of English Labour," and that is just what it is.

In another book by Thorold Rogers there appears an interesting statement.

"... from 1260 to 1540 poverty was a distant risk in England."—(*The Industrial and Commercial History of England*, page 10.)

This very concise statement throws the poverty of Elizabethan days into bold relief in contrast with the nearly three centuries to which Mr. Rogers refers.

Another book that tells a very gruesome story of working class suffering is "An Economic History of England, 1066 to 1874," by Charlotte M. Waters, published by Oxford University Press. The author deals, interestingly and with numerous illustrations, with the causes of working class poverty during the latter fifty years of the 16th century; the break up of the feudal system, tenants turned from their land by landlords who enclosed large tracts for sheep farms, bands of feudal soldiers dismissed from their service, manufacture replacing handicraft, etc. A very, very useful book indeed.

If one would thoroughly understand that period of change that culminated with the English revolution during the 17th century and was at its highest tempo during the reign of Elizabeth I, one should read "Thomas More and his Utopia" by Karl Kautsky published by A. & C. Black, Ltd. Sir Thomas More died in 1535, two years after Elizabeth I was born and twenty-three before she succeeded to the throne. He cannot be classified as an Elizabethan, but Karl Kautsky, in writing of him and his work, devotes a large portion of his book to sketching a background of the social conditions of the 15th and 16th centuries in order that his readers may see the life of More in its proper perspective. So, we get a splendid history of the times and conditions under which the poor of the Elizabethan age lived.

To keep the list as short as possible we will mention only one more work, a well known one; "Capital" by Karl Marx. In Volume I of this great work, part VIII, Chapter XXVIII, entitled, "Bloody Legislation against the expropriated from the end of 15th Century. Forcing down Wages by Acts of Parliament," Marx tells of the cruelty of the oppressive working class legislation of the period and gives us chapter and verse of a number of the acts that were passed and enforced.

Other books dealing with this period of English history can be traced through the bibliographies in the ones we have mentioned should anyone wish to study the period in greater detail. There are also constitutional histories, political histories and social histories of recent publication dates that will help to build up a complete picture of the age.

When one realises that the Elizabethan period was a time of acute class struggle between the rising capitalist class and the decaying feudal groups one is better able to appreciate the works of men like William

Shakespeare 1564-1616, and Miguel de Cervantes, 1547-1616. Both of these men, although they probably did not understand the social events that were taking place around them, at least saw those events and wrote about them. In novels, poems and plays they joined in the popular ridicule of the expiring feudal aristocracy. Shakespeare lampoons them with his Sir John Falstaff and Cervantes does likewise with his Don Quixote.

There are numerous works of Shakespeare to be had now-a-days and there is a cheap issue of Don Quixote published by Penguin Books at 8s. 6d.

Equipped with the knowledge contained in these books we can better understand what our masters desire when they prate about the second Elizabethan age being as glorious as the first. They are not interested in our living conditions. They are looking with shining eyes to the prospect of expanding trade and commerce, to

enterprises that produce such astounding profits as did the Levant Company and the East India Company, to support and encouragement by the state, and to a docile and disciplined working class. That is what they mean when they talk of the Glory of Britain, that is what all the flummery and speech making of the coronation period indicate.

W. WATERS.

"CLEARER THINKING"

Article in June SOCIALIST STANDARD "About Books," p.85 col. 2, quoted "Clearer Thinking" published by Watts & Co. at 2s.

A representative of Watts & Co. points out that the price is 1s. 6d., and suggests that we put a note to this effect in the July issue.

HUMAN NATURE AND SOCIALISM

3—The Role of the Socialist

LET us try to see how socialists can use their knowledge of man in society to achieve social change. We must first discuss human nature a little further from a theoretical standpoint, in order to relate it to other socialist theories, and in particular to historical materialism.

There are two main points about human nature that are implicit in Marxist theory (though Marx and Engels avoided the term "nature" in connection with "human" because of its idealist associations). One is that it is essentially subject to change, and the other is that it is entirely made up of the behaviour and powers of individuals or groups within their environments.

Human nature is to be understood neither idealistically nor mechanically, but dialectically. It is no single universal form or essence which individual human beings share; nor is it the mere sum total of those individuals. It is the sum total of the needs, desires and activities of human beings in society. In other words, man can be no more than what men actually do in their historical and social environments. Thus human nature is essentially the history of humanity, and has nothing to do with any idealistic concept of some changeless entity called man.

Man has evolved as a species slowly and continuously through all the various phases of human society, from tree-climbing anthropoid to his present status. This evolution has been social, cultural, psychological—but hardly at all biological. It is therefore in a dual sense—biologically and socially—that human nature is to be understood; and this is why it has been truly said that human nature changes in some of its respects because it remains the same in others.

Production and Change

Of all the factors determining historical development the decisive element is the production and reproduction of life and its material requirements. Men must be in a position to live in order to be able to make history. The production of the immediate material

means of subsistence, and the consequent degree of economic development form the basis upon which all other institutions, concepts and ideas have been evolved. All these things must be explained in the light of the material basis of life, and not vice versa.

Against this, the idealists portray history as though it were dancing to the tune of men's ideas, or, more precisely, the ideas of a few "great men." So determined were Marx and Engels to combat this line of thought that they ran the risk of being accused of saying that the production of the means of life is the only factor causing change. But, as Engels points out,

"Political, juridical, philosophical, religious, literary, artistic, etc., development is based on economic development. But all these react upon one another and also upon the economic base. It is not that the economic position is the cause and alone active, while everything else has a passive effect. There is, rather, interaction on the basis of the economic necessity, which ultimately always asserts itself." — ("Marx - Engels Selected Correspondence," p. 517.)

At each stage of history there is a sum of productive forces and relations of individuals to things and to one another—all handed down to each generation from its predecessor. While these forces and relations are modified by the new generation, they also prescribe the conditions of life of that generation. In short, circumstances make men just as much as men make circumstances.

Men are products of certain conditions, and therefore changed men are products of other conditions. But it must never be forgotten that conditions are changed precisely by men. Man changes history, and is thereby himself changed and, in this sense, "all history is but a record of the continuous transformation of human nature" (Marx).

When production was primitive, man's simple biological needs determined his activities—but as production developed his needs developed also. In the process of production man is driven to a fuller comprehension of the world in which he lives. By acting

on the external world and changing it, man changes his own nature.

History-making Animal

The basic difference between man and other animals—the change-over, as it were, from non-human to human—is when he begins to produce his own means of subsistence. This is not to say that animals don't produce. The difference is that human production is premeditated, planned action, directed towards definite ends. Again, this doesn't mean that no animal acts according to a plan. But, with man, consciousness takes the place of instinct, or, to put it another way, his "instinct" is a conscious one.

"What distinguishes the most incompetent architect from the best of bees is that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he constructs it in reality," wrote Marx. The labour process ends in the creation of something which, when the process began, already existed in the worker's imagination in an ideal form. We may say that what ultimately distinguishes men from other animals is consciousness of method in production. The animal merely uses external nature, and brings about changes in it by his presence. Man, by his changes, makes nature serve his ends.

Yet man is not only a nature-controlling animal. He is also a history-making one. He is the sole animal who has worked his way out of the merely animal state—his normal state is one of consciousness, one to be created by himself. Man's mastery over nature, of which he is a part, consists in the fact that he is able to know and correctly apply its laws.

Man has achieved a considerable measure of success as a nature-controlling animal, but when it comes to history-making there is much less cause for satisfaction. Broadly speaking, human action has achieved its desired end only in exceptional cases, and much more often it has achieved the exact opposite. Unforeseen effects have predominated, and uncontrolled forces have been far more powerful than those set in motion according to a plan.

These and other considerations lead socialists to believe that man has not yet made truly human history. "Only conscious organisation of social production," says Engels, "can lift mankind above the rest of the animal world as regards the social aspect, in the same way that production in general has done this for men in their aspect as species."

Understanding and Co-operating

The question may be asked: why has man, who has been so successful in developing his powers of production, made such a failure of history? The answer is that men have made bad history because they have been unable to prevent the means of production from conflicting with the relations of production. They have been so preoccupied with having to "make a living" in competition with others that they have had no control over the long-term consequences of their actions. The history and human nature that have resulted have thus been unplanned and mostly unintended.

In the process of controlling nature man has been scientific, in the widest sense. But in the process of making history he has not. Man makes a machine by manipulating suitable materials in a certain way according to a planned purpose. On the other hand,

he makes history as an indirect result, almost a by-product, of quite another activity—that of competing with his fellow-man to "earn a living."

The conditions of property society have never been, and can never be, such as to allow men to solve their problems with a collective will or according to a collective plan. The dominating motive being individual self-interest, their efforts clash, what each individual seeks is obstructed by others, and what emerges is something that no one sought.

Man has had greater success in his efforts to master the forces of nature than those of society, which dominate him as a power independent of himself. Slave to classes and to the conditions of class society, man (whether as owner of property or non-owner) has been merely a class animal. He has not yet become truly human, in the sense that he has been passive instead of active in the historical process that makes human nature.

The case for Socialism amounts to saying that history, like the control of nature, ought to be planned and consciously organised. It ought to be produced, like any other product, for a purpose, and this purpose ought to be broadly human, not narrowly individual. It should aim at the transformation of human nature to make man integrated, complete, and balanced through the free use of his creative energies.

The role of the socialist consists in his capacity for understanding the world, for understanding its natural and historical movement, and for co-operating consciously with all the factors that are working towards classless society. We are able to speak of Socialism as a potentiality because it already exists in the minds of men in an ideal form, just as the house exists in the architect's imagination even before the blueprint stage.

Without classes, human nature can at last become the product of human science rather than the by-product of class struggle. With the abolition of class control of economic forces, when the whole of society has gained mastery of the conditions of social life, man will be able to exercise real control over his own nature. With the release of his human powers from capitalist servitude, he will be able to shape his environment so that it promotes the fullest possible development of all his faculties.

S.R.P.

(Next Article: Capitalist Patterns of Behaviour.)

PAMPHLETS

"The Socialist Party and War"	1/-	(Post free 1/2)
"Russia Since 1917"	1/-	" " 1/2
"The Communist Manifesto and the Last Hundred Years"	1/-	" " 1/2
"The Racial Problem—A Socialist Analysis"	1/-	" " 1/2
"Socialism"	4d.	" " 6d.
"Socialism or Federal Union?"	4d.	" " 6d.
"The Socialist Party: Its Principles and Policy"	4d.	" " 6d.
"Is Labour Government the Way to Socialism?"	4d.	" " 6d.
"Nationalisation or Socialism?"	6d.	" " 8d.

All obtainable from the Literature Committee,
52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

THE SUEZ CANAL IN WORLD AFFAIRS

THE Suez Canal is the gateway to the Orient, the connecting link between East and West, between Britain and the members of the Commonwealth in the East.

The story of the Canal and the struggle for control of this area is told by Hugh J. Schofield in "The Suez Canal in World Affairs," published by Constellation Books, London.

Many centuries ago the wealth of the East was brought to the Mediterranean via Egypt. About 2,000 years B.C. a canal was built joining the Red Sea and the Nile. This canal, called the Canal of the Pharaohs, was silted up and rebuilt during successive reigns and renamed under succeeding empires. Finally it was closed in 776 A.D. while Egypt was under Arab domination. Then trade between the East and West declined. In the 13th and 14th centuries Marco Polo and other travellers opened up the Northern Overland route to India and China. The growth of the aggressive power of Turkey blocked this route. A new route was sought. Christopher Columbus sailed west and Vasco de Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope. The Cape route gave successively the monopoly of Eastern trade to the Portuguese, the Dutch, the French and the British. To gain and maintain this monopoly Britain made herself mistress of the seas.

France with her southern seaboard on the Mediterranean was interested in opening up the ancient route to the East through Egypt. But competition with the Cape route was impossible while goods had to be carried by camel to Alexandria, then transhipped. A canal between Suez and Cairo was suggested, but the political and practical obstacles seemed insurmountable. Egypt was part of the Ottoman Empire and it was thought that there was a difference of 30ft. in the sea levels of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea. English merchants aware of French designs sought privileges in Egypt. Both French and English governments sought influence in Egypt and Turkey and when war broke out between England and France in 1793, France tried to establish herself there, but Britain put an end to these territorial ambitions by defeating the French at the Battle of the Nile.

About 30 years after, an Englishman Lieut. Waghorn started a postal route to India via Egypt demonstrating practically the advantages of this route. Engineers investigated the question of the difference in sea levels and a sect founded by the utopian socialist Saint Simon set up an organisation to examine the question of a canal financially and technically. An alternative scheme for building a railroad was put forward, supported by Britain. But France continued to retain her interest in the canal. Both Governments sought concessions from the Viceroy of Egypt who played the one against the other. When the Viceroy died, Britain received a concession to build a railroad because she had paid court to his successor. The dispute between France and Britain might have become serious if they had not been already allied in prosecuting the Crimean War.

The advantage gained by Britain was offset when

Ferdinand de Lesseps received a concession from Mahomet Said, the next Viceroy, authorising him to form an international company to build a canal. The British Government opposed the venture and effectively warned off British capital from taking part in it. But after the construction of the canal Britain realised her mistake and bought up about half the shares. Then in 1882 when rioting broke out in Alexandria British troops took possession. Britain wished to preserve the right to defend the Canal if any Power attacked Egypt and to guarantee with other Powers to keep the Canal open in peace and in war. Other Powers disagreed but a compromise was reached with the Convention of 1888, which made Turkey nominal guardian and guaranteed to keep the Canal open in any circumstances. But Britain still remained in Egypt.

Germany, seeking means of expansion, seized on the possibilities of the undeveloped near East and set out to build the Berlin-Baghdad Railway which would offset Britain's domination of Egypt and her use of the Suez Canal. When war broke out between Britain and Germany in 1914, Egypt lined up with Britain and closed the Canal to enemy shipping. Turkey, seeking to regain control in Egypt set out to invade it. Britain made Egypt a Protectorate and with the defeat of Germany and Turkey became guardian of the Canal.

In 1922, Egypt was declared an independent state but the Egyptian Government was dissatisfied with the conditions of the declaration. Italy's longstanding threat to Britain in the Mediterranean culminated in the declaration of war against France and Britain in 1940. The Canal was attacked by air and Egypt was attacked by land from Libya. Because of Italy's lack of success Germany took a hand. For a considerable time the Mediterranean was closed to allied shipping but with the halting of Rommel at El Alamein the Canal was made safe to send aid to Russia in the effort to defeat the Japanese in the Far East.

Since World War II, Egypt has sought to terminate the 1936 Agreement which allows British troops to occupy the Canal Zone. But Egypt, like all other belligerents in war, has shown that she won't pay any attention to the 1888 Convention which guaranteed to keep the Canal open to all shipping in peace or war. In the conflict between Israel and the Arab League, Egypt stopped supplies going to Israel.

Mr. Schonfield's story of the Canal shows its importance to the capitalist Powers in peace and in war.

Today Egypt wants Britain to evacuate her troops from the Canal Zone but Britain is reluctant to do so until she is assured of strong Middle East defences. Certain sections of British capitalist class opinion would like to make the Canal Zone the central base in these defences because of its geographical position, and oppose handing over to Egypt this base with its hundreds of millions of pounds worth of installations. Other sections of the British capitalist class remember the limited use of the Canal during the two world wars and its vulnerability to land attack and are of the opinion that the North East Mediterranean coast with

the mountains behind forming a barrier to landborne troops would provide a more suitable base. They claim that the Canal will decline in importance with the increasing use of air instead of the sea for conveying troops and equipment.

To understand why the Canal is important it is necessary to know something about present day society. The means of producing society's needs are owned by a small section of society, the capitalist class, and the vast majority, the working class, must sell their labour power to the few who own those means of production. In exchange for their labour power the workers receive wages that are very often barely enough to live on. What the workers produce over their wages allows the capitalist class to live comfortably and increase their capital. To realise this surplus the capitalist class must sell their goods and must find raw materials with which

they can be produced. This means that there must be trade routes to bring the raw materials from where they are produced to where they are needed and to take the finished articles to the markets where they can be sold. And to protect these trade routes in event of war the different sections of the capitalist class struggle for control of strategic points.

Mr. Schonfield would like to see the dream of Ferdinand de Lesseps come true. He would like the Canal used for the benefit of humanity. He would like the Canal used to build up the backward countries and raise their standards of living. But if the Canal is to be used for the benefit of humanity the means of living will have to be the property of all society. Then goods won't be produced and exchanged for the profit of the few but distributed solely for the use of all.

J.T.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Mitcham Discussion Group held its first meeting when Comrade Turner opened a discussion on Socialism. Considerable interest was taken by the audience of twenty people and the discussion continued for some time. It is hoped that a good attendance will be maintained when this group meets again. As a permanent meeting place has not been arranged, will members and sympathisers interested in this group please contact the Propaganda Committee at Head Office.

A Party Sympathiser in Dublin who has frequently contributed to the Party Funds has again written us and sent Five Pounds as a donation to help on the work for Socialism. This is greatly appreciated.

Donations to Parliamentary Fund. In response to an appeal in the May SOCIALIST STANDARD the total received to June 16th was £69 14s. We regret that

these figures were not available for the June SOCIALIST STANDARD.

Hackney Branch are organising a speakers' and general knowledge class and discussion group at Bethnal Green Town Hall on alternate Thursdays from July 2nd at 8 p.m. It is hoped to encourage members to take the Party platform and for the class to run outdoor meetings later in the year. Any members and sympathisers who can come along will be very welcome.

Hackney Branch's outing to Brighton on June 7th was fairly successful; being attended by 18 members and two children. A meeting was run on the sea front (Fishmarket) from 3 p.m. till 8.15 p.m. being supported by some 10 members of Brighton branch. It is hoped that a similar outing can be arranged in September.

P.H.

KOREA—CRADLE OF CONFLICT

MANY of those who have been fighting in Korea probably do not understand the reasons why they have been called upon to risk life and limb in this particular theatre of war; a large number probably had not even heard of that country before. It may be just as well for the interests of the great powers concerned that their workers have been kept in ignorance of the role of Korea in world affairs otherwise it might have been difficult to induce them to fight.

An Ancient Culture

With a history of 4,000 years the Koreans are an old civilised group with a high cultural level linked with that of China. They have substantially contributed to the cause of progress—printing was first brought to Europe from Korea. Korean celadon ware is considered to be amongst the most beautiful pottery to

have been produced anywhere in the world.

A veritable Korean renaissance followed the founding in 1392 of a new dynasty (which dynasty has lasted until modern times) and in order to emancipate the population from the burden of learning Chinese ideographs an alphabet of 26 letters was invented so simple in outline and of such phonetic adaptability that they can learn to read in less than a month. They also invented the first metal movable type anticipating Europe by 50 years. Astronomical instruments of a high order were made and a whole new literature flourished. It cannot therefore rightly be said of the Koreans as it has been said of other people subjugated and exploited by capitalist powers, that they are in need of the civilizing influence of the West.

It is only since the eighteen seventies, that is, since industrial capitalism opened up Asia, that Korea has

been a cradle of conflict. The Chinese ruling class considered that control of the peninsula was necessary for defence of their Empire and up to this time exercised a suzerainty over it. As Li Hung-chang, the famous Chinese viceroy put it in 1879, "Korea is the wall protecting China's Provinces, the lips protecting the teeth."

China has been constantly threatened by the rising powers of Russia and Japan, both being busily engaged in wresting territory and concessions in Manchuria from the Chinese.

China has had the fear that Korea would "ripen like a pear and then drop into the jaws of Russia." There were ice-free harbours for ice-bound Asiatic Russia and a footing on the mainland for Japan to be obtained as a result of successful adventures in Korea. A French expedition under Admiral Rose was severely handled by Korean forces and forced to retire from the scene. Again in 1871 an American flotilla was sent to repeat Commodore Perry's exploit in Japan but after killing a number of Koreans the American fleet left. In 1876 the Japanese succeeded in forcing Korea open. In 1894 through the Japan-China war Japan succeeded in forwarding Japanese influence at the expense of the Chinese.

The Japan-Russian war began with Japan guaranteeing the independence of Korea but ended with the Treaty of Portsmouth when the United States assured the Japanese that they would look favourably on the Japanese assumption of authority in Korea. In 1905 the Japanese by force instituted a virtual protectorate and finally annexed Korea to the Japanese Empire in 1910.

A Valuable Consolation Prize

Quite apart from the strategic value of the peninsula the wealth of the gold, copper, coal, iron and tungsten resources and the profit obtained from exploiting the 19 million population is quite a considerable consolation prize for the successful "liberator" of Korea. Tungsten is used for hardening steel and is an essential in present day armament making, and as it can be found in but a few places in the world, the output from Korea is particularly sought after.

The Korean War

In 1945, after the defeat of Japan, the U.S.S.R. seized their chance when, by an apparent blunder on the part of the Allies, they were able to obtain a belligerent occupants' mandate in North Korea. The Chinese have for long been well aware of these aims. Even in 1894 when Russia was making friendly overtures to China Li Hung-chang wrote:—

"Russia is to-day our greatest friend and our most to-be-feared enemy. She is our friend because Great Britain and France pose as our friends also. She is our greatest enemy because what the Russians call the trend of her destiny makes her so. She dominates all Northern Asia and hopes some day to have preponderating influence in China. She will help us to keep Japan out because she herself wants to get in."

In 1950 the American forces in South Korea defeated the North Koreans. This was the moment for China to step into the breach in North Korea to prevent, firstly, the Americans seizing the whole peninsula and

possibly eventually installing a puppet Japanese control and, secondly, to forestall the Russians from completely taking over in North Korea.

Development of Chinese Patriotism

There were, however, further advantages for the Chinese in engaging in a foreign war. The Peoples' Republic of China, which had wrested control from the Chiang Kai-shek regime in 1949, were faced with many problems in carrying out their policy of developing China along Western lines. One of the legacies they had to take over from the past was the absence of patriotism. It is necessary for the protection of any capitalist ruling class if they are to survive in the jungle of world capitalism to have a working-class willing to fight for the fatherland. The war in Korea provided a chance for developing the beginning of Chinese patriotism. The Government succeeded in getting popular support for the war by identifying the maintenance of the rising standard of living in China with the necessity of repelling foreign enemies. The task was made easier by the U.S. being the supporters of the former discredited and very unpopular Chiang-Kai-shek clique.

There was the added advantage in giving the government a chance to glorify the Chinese army. Their armed forces are a great help to any ambitious capitalist group who wish to continue exploiting their own workers and if they can also seize the preserves of other national groups. But unfortunately for the rulers in China, soldiering is a despised occupation, and this attitude on the part of the general population has a harmful effect on the maintenance of reliability and efficiency of the armed forces. The internal propaganda which accompanied the military adventure in Korea helped to reform this view which was so harmful to the armed forces and therefore against ruling class interests. Many workers get killed or maimed in the war; the workers pay the price but the rulers obtain the benefit.

Was it worth fighting for?

An armistice has been arranged and there is a prospect that the war to "liberate" Korea will come to an end. Devastation, disease and death are the lot of many of the unfortunate inhabitants of this war-ravaged country, and together with the casualties of the many foreign nationals involved the military adventure in Korea has exacted a heavy toll. But it has been worth it—for the ruling class. China has obtained part control of North Korea at the expense of the U.S.S.R. and has driven into the Chinese working class a measure of patriotic spirit. The U.S.A. have retained control of South Korea with its strategic importance and vast mineral wealth. The U.S.S.R. have retained a large measure of control over the civil administration of North Korea, and in exchange for arms and ammunition supplied to China for use against the U.S. has obtained the bulk of Chinese exports at low prices. Japan has made plenty of profit on war supplies to the Allies, and may in addition, eventually be allowed by the U.S.A. to extend her influence in South Korea.

So in conclusion, Korea—cradle of conflict—is a pawn in power politics.

F. OFFORD.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 751, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire. Sec. c/o 29, Lincoln Ave., Belfast, N. Ireland.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

SOCIALISM AND QUESTIONS OF THE DAY

We have now prepared a pamphlet under the above title which we are sending to the printer. Unfortunately we have no money in hand at the moment to meet the cost. Will members and sympathisers send us what donations they can immediately so that we can pay for deliveries of the pamphlet as they come. It will be a pity if we cannot have this pamphlet on sale for the summer propaganda season.

The question is urgent so send us money as quickly as you can.

Reading

Will members and sympathisers interested in forming a group in this district please write to J. A. O'Brien, 31, Frensham Green, Shinfield Rise, Reading.

Transport Workers

Will Party members employed by the L.T.E., interested in co-operating to extend Socialist propaganda amongst transport workers, please get in touch with Frank P. Dunne, 17, St. Mary's Grove, Canonbury, N.1.

BLOOMSBURY BRANCH

Will members and sympathisers please note that there will be no Branch meetings during August. The first meeting in September will be held on Thursday, 3rd September.

SOUTH WALES

Will readers of the "Socialist Standard" in the Swansea, Lougher, Llanelly and Gorseinon areas get in contact with the Secretary of the Swansea Group for the purpose of arranging a meeting to discuss the policy of the S.P.G.B.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN JULY

Mondays: Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.
Fridays: Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.
Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
 Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
 Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
 Hyde Park, 6 p.m.
Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.
 White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11 a.m.
 East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
 Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
 Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
 Exmouth Market.
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.
Thursdays: Tower Hill.
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

CROYDON BRANCH

The following lectures will be given at 8 p.m. at RUSKIN HOUSE, Wellesley Rd., Croydon (near W. Croydon Stn.).

July 8th T. Lord, "Health and the Socialist case."
 July 22nd H. Jarvis, "What Socialists should know about the Bible."
 Aug. 5th G. Brynolf, "Russian Capitalism."
 Aug. 19th H. Jarvis, "Capitalism and Food."
 Sept. 2nd, "An open Forum on Trade Unions."

You and your friends are cordially invited.

TO MEMBERS AND SYMPATHISERS

Will members and sympathisers interested in the formation of a branch of the Party in the Hammersmith district please communicate with B. Flitter, 17 Chiswick Village, W.4.

READ ALSO—

THE

WESTERN SOCIALIST

The Journal of Scientific Socialism in the Western Hemisphere. Published jointly by the W.S.P. of the United States and the Socialist Party of Canada.

Per issue 6d. (Post free 7½d.)

Postal Subscription Rate:

6 issues 3/9; 12 issues 7/6

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Blackfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 1st 16th and 19th July, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 7 Paradise Street, Rugby.

SWANSEA.—D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2. (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hallard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.15.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Peters, London Road, Wickford. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at Digbeth Institute. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. First and third Thursdays in July (2nd and 16th), Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., E. M. P. Hirst, 35, Addington Square, S.E.5.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 55, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Ecceles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Ecceles. Secretary, F. Lea. **Fulham** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulheron, 366, Aikenshead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 13th and 27th July, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to A. Iveney, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 32 Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. P. Hart, 54, Ashdale House, N.4.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. 9 Vicarage Rd, Kingston (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushy Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets Tuesdays, July 7th and 21st at 7.45 p.m., Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate. Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 588 Vol. 49 August, 1953

A LABOUR M.P. IN RUSSIA

AMERICAN COMICS

KENYA AND BERLIN

HUMAN NATURE AND
SOCIALISM

ABOUT BOOKS

SLINGS AND ARROWS

ARMS AND THE MAN

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

Cold War Inside the Kremlin

UNDER SOCIALISM, when classes and class interests will no longer exist, the reason for the existence of political parties representing contending class interests will have gone. Decisions about the best policy to be followed to promote the well-being of all will be reached democratically by informed discussion. That situation is, however, something yet to be brought about since socialism exists nowhere in the world.

In Britain and many other countries capitalism has evolved a political system through which control of the government is vested in the politicians who are able to secure for their party or groups of parties the support of voters at elections, conducted on the basis of universal adult suffrage. This system works, and provides capitalism with the stability it needs, only because the major political parties and the voters behind them are agreed on the continuance of capitalism and differ only on secondary issues of policy.

In earlier times when the electorate was a very restricted body of property owners, and still earlier, before Parliament had made its hold on the armed forces and the monarchy effective, the struggles between contending economic interests to control the State machine were settled by disorderly public demonstrations, by show of armed force or by costly and ruinous civil war.

In Russia, since the overthrow of the Czarist monarchy in 1917, rule has been in the hands of a group based on the Communist Party, all other political parties being ruthlessly suppressed. In such conditions it was necessary to retain and strengthen the Secret Police, which, with its own powerful armed forces constitutes one of the three pillars of the Russian government, alongside the army and the Communist Party. Under this political system the rulers of Russia have had to face problems of great size and complexity including civil war, invasion in the second world war, the dispossession of the peasants and their forcible combination into collective farms, and the problem of trying to persuade and cajole the workers into accepting their exploitation and the particular hardship involved in building up modern industry in what was a predominantly peasant country. The inevitable tension has been aggravated by the need to impose a large measure of centralisation not only on strongly autonomous regional interests inside Russia but also on the "satellite" countries in Eastern Europe brought, since 1945, into the Russian sphere of interest. Stalin's death brought the problem to a head, and forced the question, which individual was to gain the succession at the centre and on which of the three pillars of the State,

Party, Army and Secret Police, he would lean. In this situation the sudden flare up of revolt in East Berlin and the plain signs of incipient breakaway in the satellite countries were, to those at the centre, alarming reminders of the dangers surrounding them.

Beria's removal gives colour to the view that the Party and the Army have been able to agree to line up against the Secret Police but that, even if it is a correct interpretation of forces about which so little definite is known, could only be a provisional solution. It does not settle the question of bringing all the forces of the State, including the army, under the control of political heads who would owe their authority to having majority support in a Parliament resting on genuine electoral contests. Where, as in Britain, continuous contact between electors, the government and the opposition is maintained by political parties operating in the open, and seeking both to reflect and to mould political opinion, a stable basis is provided for the administration as well as means to change it at elections. Lacking such a system contending interests in Russia, with their divergent views on the running of capitalism, can only intrigue for power at the centre and seek support in Army, Secret Police, Communist Party, regional

autonomous movements, or anywhere else where discontent makes itself manifest.

The removal of Beria and the likely curbing of the power of the Secret Police, have not materially altered the system. In a country where ordinary political organisation and activity is illegal and discontent is therefore driven underground an elaborate secret police organisation is indispensable and it will be observed that Beria's removal and other changes have all been initiated and carried out arbitrarily from the top, with the masses of the people kept completely in the dark until they are simultaneously informed of what has been done and called upon to hold "spontaneous" demonstrations approving it. As is usual in a Police State the defeated contestants are removed and held guilty without any such formality as waiting for a public trial or allowing their supporters to state their case in the open.

Whichever group wins the present round in the struggle for power the problem of broadening the base of the Russian political system remains to be solved. Whether it will be by compromise among the rivals or by armed struggle remains to be seen.

H.

ABOUT BOOKS

RUSSIAN novelists have a knack of cramming their stories with such a large number of characters that the majority of their non-Russian readers get lost in the crowd. Adding to the confusion is the similarity of male and female Christian names and the addition of a suffix to the surname to denote the female. Again, it appears that the name by which a person is addressed depends on the relationship with the person who is addressing him. A stranger or a remote acquaintance will use the surname, a friend or close acquaintance will use the first Christian name whilst relatives and very close friends will address a person by his or her second Christian name. This use of different names to denote the same person becomes mystifying to most English readers.

Although Sholokov's books are constructed similarly, when we read them we do not experience the same confusion that attends the reading of other Russian authors. He so presents his characters that we are able to distinguish one from the others right from the word "Go."

Sholokov's two earliest books, "And Quiet Flows the Don" and "The Don Flows Home to the Sea" are now world famous, and justly so. The first of these books was originally published in Russia in 1929 and the second in 1940. A recent reprint in English has been published by Putnam and Co., Ltd., and the two volumes are available at 12s. 6d. each.

The story, which is continuous through the two books, is enthralling. It presents us with a history of the Don Cossack peasant farmers from the early years of the present century up to the early nineteen-twenties and takes us through the latter part of the Czarist regime, the 1914-1918 war, the Bolshevik seizure of power and the counter-revolutionary war in the Cossack regions.

The Cossack farmers had little interest in the

theories and aspirations of either side in the counter-revolutionary war. They desired little more than to be left alone to till their land and enjoy the fruits of their work. When they took up arms it was with the intent of driving out one bunch of oppressors or the other, which accounts for the fact that some of them not infrequently changed sides. It also accounts for one theme in Sholokov's story where intimate friends and even relatives fight one another from opposite ranks.

The great lesson to be learned from this story of the Don Cossacks is that revolutionary social changes cannot be brought about merely by the passing of laws or the issuing of decrees. The Bolshevik idea, that a political party with the support of a small minority of workers should seize political power and then start to ram revolutionary changes down the throats of a vast majority of peasants, is pathetically false. They found that, in order to impose the mildest of their measures for collectivisation, they had to resort to armed force and precipitate a civil war. The Cossacks, with the big landowners, enrolled under the banners of the White Russian Generals. Many of them fought in insurgent bands attached to neither side.

The peasant farmer makes his own home, builds his own farmhouses, breeds his own cattle and grows his own crops. Everything around him is individually, or family, produced. The idea that the fruit of his individual effort should be socially appropriated is foreign to him. His highest political aspiration is to increase his individual farm holding, not to surrender all he has to a collective farm community of which he is an unwilling member. Even when the Bolsheviks had militarily subdued the Don Cossack region they were not able to enforce their instructions. They passed from compromise to compromise until their original proposals were lost to sight.

The fratricidal war the Cossacks fought was grim

and brutal and Sholokov's story is in keeping with the time about which he writes. If he has a bias in favour of either party in that war he hides it well. His story is thrilling, exciting and tragic. It's great.

Mikhail Sholokov has written a third book entitled, "Virgin Soil Uplifted" (same publishers, same price). In this he takes up the story of the collectivisation of the Cossack farms from the year 1930. The story is good but does not compare with the earlier two works. One could almost imagine it was written by a different author.

By a combination of propaganda and compulsion

W. WATERS.

TOOTH, NAIL AND TIGER-SKIN

BITAIN'S traditional cultural intercourse with Europe has in the past hundred years been supplemented—and possibly, to some extent, supplanted—by a transatlantic inter-traffic. Having no barrier of language to surmount, the exchange between Britain and America has included popular as well as academic culture; aided by radio, talking pictures and, most recently, the long residence of thousands of American servicemen in Britain, the features of everyday life in America have impinged more and more upon British custom.

National culture in America has no long history preceding the mechanization of work and leisure, and so the slick, trashy product is more easily accepted there, while its importation into Britain has frequently caused concern to those who stand as guardians of public taste and morality. The adjective "American," is often one of disapproval; and never has the disapproval been stronger than for a contemporary art-form which, hard as the moralists try, keeps on growing in popularity—American comics.

American comics are not comic. Their subject-matter is cowboys, crime, horror, adventure, sex and space-travel. Something over fifty million copies are sold every month in the United States, and since the war there has been a growing readership in this country. They are marketed by syndicates which operate on both sides of the Atlantic, and are produced by artists working in assembly-line fashion—one drawing the figures, another doing the lettering, and so on. America calls them "squinkies," and their stock-in-trade is beatings, bludgeonings and fee faw fums.

The beginnings of strip drawings are ancient. Egyptian rock tombs have sets of pictures recording the phases of wrestling bouts and acrobatic feats. The modern comic strip began in the American popular press near the end of the nineteenth century and, until recent years, drew its material almost wholly from workaday and domestic life; the awful child, the hen-pecked husband and the pert stenographer were its dramatis personae. With humour as the chief intention, the technique and conventions of the strip were perfected.

It was during the great depression that humour gave way to adventure, suspense and muscle-parade; possibly everyday life was too grim to be funny any longer. Tarzan and Superman took over, and the comics turned to worlds where nobody asked: "Brother,

the Bolshevik Government was still trying to build its collective farms. The opposition from the wealthy farmers was fierce; from the poor ones it was sullen. The overall results were most discouraging to the men who were sent to the Cossack region to carry out the Communists' instructions.

Although the story in this book is not continued on from the other two, and although it is not such a splendid tale, it is worth reading in order to follow up the history of the Cossack farmers to a more recent date.

can you spare a dime?" The squinkies were born. Their theme was action, and they were uninhibited in portraying it; the war stimulated them to greater extravagances.

The aim of the squinkie artist is to create arresting, vigorous movement and easily recognizable character-types; the limitation of the small squares—and part of them is taken up by the speech "balloons"—prohibits fastidiousness or subtlety. Technical quality varies considerably, from slick, stylish work to that of talentless amateurs. All characters are clearly labelled. Villains have black hair and thin moustaches, scientists are lean and bespectacled, and heroes have a superabundance of muscle (Ka'anga, Lord of the Jungle, has calf muscles slightly larger than his head). Heroines are wasp-waisted, but otherwise pneumatic.

Musical comedy costume is everyday wear in the squinkie world. Janga, Flower of the Wilds, Sheena, Queen of the Jungle, and Tiger Girl all appear in chic animal-skin swimsuits, while Dara of the Vikings prefers a two-piece, with helmet. The jungle men keep to trunks, of course, and the skymen—Superman, Captain Marvel and the rest—go about in long red underwear. There are rigid conventions of speech, too. In the jungle and other far away places, including outer space, they use archaic English, while all spies talk with strong foreign accents. Girls in danger have to scream "Eek!" and villains coming to their inevitable sticky ends are obliged to shout "Aarghhh!"

These are the superficial conventions of the American comics. They present, for the most part, fantasy worlds. Into these, however, they project beliefs and customs of the actual world; thus their real content is not in their local colour but in their themes, and carries a much more significant set of conventions.

The simplest, broadest and most obvious of these conventions is that good—which is equated with law and patriotism—must always triumph over its opposite. The squinkies are as determined about this as all other juvenile literature, but infinitely more ruthless; when Captain Thunder or Tiger Girl grapples with evil, the end justifies any means. In the crime strips, the violences of the gangsters and killers are exceeded by those of the police, while the various jungle lords and space conquerors manhandle wrongdoers in ways which make all-in wrestling look soft stuff.

The only circumstances in which good does not always win by a knock-out are those in which unearthly powers are involved. The squinkies have great respect

for the supernatural, and make it score freely off the lay population. "The Monster from the Pit," for example, a shaggy, shark-toothed immortal from Transylvania who changes into a New York policeman by day and goes out for blood at night, is last seen taking a large bite at his would-be slayer's throat after a graveyard fracas. The postscript asks: "How many more lives will be snuffed out by the evil Grakhu . . . before he is once more sent to the pit of evil which spawned him? None can tell." The moral clearly is that witches, warlocks, bogbarts and long-leggity beasts are a different thing altogether.

If supernatural beings are the highest class of villains, foreigners are the lowest. To be foreign in the squinkies is to be a suspicious character. Spies and saboteurs are easy game, while the perversity of murderers, mad doctors and jungle marauders is explained from their lack of fluent English. Easterners are horrific unless they are the faithful servants of jungle princesses, in which case they are simpletons, or unless they are young women, in which case they are exotic but sinister. The credulous reader can hardly avoid being persuaded that the English-speaking nations breed the best types.

Love is virtually taboo in the squinkies, but they have a high sex content. The exploits of the heroines lead them into comprehensive displays of their startling universal physique. Señorita Rio, a Government counter-spy, spends much of her working time being up-ended. Most of the jungle nobility have mates, whom they continually rescue and occasionally call "my love." Much of the paraphernalia of perversion—inter-woman fights, whips and so on—finds places in the comics, and brings to mind that their era of popularity has also been that of the Hadley Chase school of novelists.

Since their introduction to this country, squinkies have been continually under fire. Educationalists, clergy and the press have united to denounce them as a danger to morals, an incentive to mental laziness, and a cause of delinquency. As has been remarked, that has not reduced their circulation and may even have increased it. Obviously, there is something about American comics. What cultural and social significance have they? And are the charges against them true?

In the hands of accomplished or thoughtful writers and artists, the least agreeable subject-matter can be presented to some value. That cannot be said for the comics. Their situations, dialogue and characterization are crude; their drawing is never better, and usually worse, than competent; they are badly printed in gaudy colours on the cheapest paper. On their intrinsic merits, they could be written off as contemptible or laughable, or—more correctly—classified with lavatory-wall graffiti. Their paramount element, however, is one to which the lavatory wall never pretends: they present ideals and patterns of behaviour.

The principal ideals promoted by the comics have already been noted. Summarized, they are that good always wins in the end, the end justifies any means, being good means being strong, foreigners are nearly always bad, the supernatural is to be respected, and women are to be judged in terms of physical desirability. None of these is a new or unconventional proposition, though the loudest cry against the comics is that they

are subversive to morality. These are, in fact, the commonly accepted standards of our society at the present time; it is significant that the last war, which established in public consciousness that ends justify means, also brought forth the squinkies. The ethics of the strip are the ethics of dropping atom-bombs on Japanese cities. It is not a case of saying that the brutalities of the comics are insignificant compared with the horrors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, though that is true; the important point is that the morality which accepted the atom-bombs as regrettable but necessary means for a "good" cause to subdue an "evil" one is precisely the same as that of the comic, down to the inclusion of such details as the anthropologists' explanation that the Japanese are not quite the same as other people—scarcely human, in fact.

The behaviour-pattern of the comics, therefore, is an effect primarily and not a cause of modifications in morality, and—more important still—the modifications themselves are produced by the ever-changing stream of social necessity. Morality is the scheme of behaviour needed to safeguard the institutions of a social group; our society, in which the nation-state is constantly preoccupied with war and its preoccupations, has had to modify its scheme to meet the needs of increased belligerency.

The question of sexual morality is not distinct from that of morality generally. The family, the institution which it protects in our society, has in recent years weakened as a coherent and durable group; the result has been a sharp slackening in the formerly rigid code of sexual morals. The carnality of the comics mirrors rather than promotes this trend; in fact, there are few popular papers and magazines which do not deem it necessary for their circulations' sake to titillate their readers' sexual imaginations. The juxtaposition of venery and violence in the comics has additional significance. Popular fiction and the films show an increasing addiction to this sort of subject-matter; its emergence as a dominant theme in the past has preceded the ends of social epochs—the decline of Rome, the seventeenth century in England, and the years before the revolution in Russia.

The anger against American comics, then, is anger against the changing conventions of our time—in some cases, perhaps, the rage of Caliban at seeing his face in the glass. It remains to consider the other charge against them, that they are encouragements to mental laziness. If this were true, it would apply also to the popular press and most of the agencies for supplying information and entertainment. The publishers of comics, like the press and the entertainment industries, give the public what the public can cope with. The truth is that the education given to a great number of working people provides them with neither the verbal skill nor the critical outlook necessary to serious reading. They are equipped to read comics, tabloid newspapers, simple-phrased stories, and very little else. A great deal is heard about the near-illiteracy of Army recruits (one hears nothing, however, of illiteracy among young women—presumably because they are not conscripted for anything); their lack of simple verbal mechanics being known, it seems hardly consistent to accuse them of mental laziness because they like comics.

The squinkies, then, are part of the cultural pattern of our time, and reflect its consciousness just as the popular domestic novel reflected that of Victorian England. Their simple function is to provide escape, but their illusory or distant worlds form backgrounds against which the modern morality play is acted; that the morality is brutal and prurient is a comment upon our society, not upon the passing phenomena which mirror it. The exclusion of American comics from this country would mean no loss. Neither, however, would

it contribute to the re-establishment of moral standards which are no longer compatible with the driving forces of society, or to an improvement in the literacy of Army recruits. The sincere, worried people who want the comics banned have failed to understand the relationship between a popular art-form and its irreversible social environment; if they could do so, there would be less concern with the rash on the face and more with the organic causes of the malaise of our society.

R. COSTER.

A LABOUR M.P. ON RUSSIA

IN the early years after the Russian revolution most people who went there went looking for something and they usually succeeded in finding what they looked for. It often depended on their prejudice or ignorance whether they found good or evil. Some claimed to see Socialism there but the S.P.G.B. said that the new rulers of Russia could not do otherwise than build up capitalism in Russia at that time and in that stage of economic and historic development. We rejected then as now all claims that Socialism was being introduced.

What to others has been miraculous achievement has to us been the normal course of capitalist industrial expansion; in a country which arrived late on the capitalist scene and had a lot of catching up to do.

If people who go to Russia believe that Socialism or Communism exists there, they will look at Russian institutions and see differences which don't really exist or they will magnify superficial differences out of all proportion. This self-deception or misguided observation undoubtedly exists, quite apart from deliberately coloured press, screen and radio propaganda.

Mr. Harold Wilson, President of the Board of Trade in the Labour government, recently returned from Russia and wrote two articles for the *Daily Mirror* (June 8th-9th, 1953) on what he saw.

On the whole Mr. Wilson painted quite a rosy picture of Russia but he shows very clearly what is his own standpoint. The report opens with the revealing statement that "ten years from now Russian Production—unless China absorbs some of it—will be challenging us in the world markets."

"The Russians are behind us now—but they are catching up."

Although the articles were open to be read by something over 4,000,000 members of the working class, the "us" referred to is the British capitalist class because "world markets" are not the assets or interests of the workers. This fact holds good for our fellow workers in Russia too.

We are told "most women work, and old men too."

"Of two old men, waiters at my hotel, one was nearly eighty."

Piece-work in Russia

Mr. Wilson, when in the Labour Government, was thereby associated with government propaganda to

encourage "piece-work" as a means of stepping up production. He also used to be on the staff of the Ministry of Labour and must be familiar with the complaints of British workers that as output rises piece-rates are cut by employers. He found the same in Russia.

"They are on piece-rate there. But the piece-rate changes. As some people work faster and earn bonuses so the rate is cut—and all workers have to keep pace so that they can earn a living wage."

The ex-Labour leader was not kind enough to tell us if in his opinion this sort of thing is Socialism, but if it is then they had better insert another "S" in the U.S.A. and call that socialist too for exactly the same conditions prevail there. Of course we know that the *Daily Worker* will tell us it is "socialist wages" and "socialist competition" but they never say where it differs from capitalist wages and competition.

It seems that the Russian propaganda agencies have got the workers at it to even a worse degree there than ours have here.

"Anyone not pulling his weight would not only be reported to the factory committees. He would be taken into a corner by his fellow-workers and get rough treatment. He would be letting the side down, perhaps imperilling the wage-rate—and hampering production." (Mr. Wilson's italics.)

Those capitalist powers ranged up against the Russian bloc MUST of necessity pretend that a totally different set-up obtains there, and the Russian bloc of capitalist nations must play the same game.

How else could they kid their respective wage-slaves to treat each other as enemies. It was exactly the same old story about Germany. If the workers of both sides got the idea that it was fundamentally the same system the world over, when they were told it must be fought they might think of fighting it at home, only with knowledge and understanding instead of bombs and guns.

Wages, Prices and Capitalism in Russia

In comparing prices of goods in Russia with their equivalents here, Mr. Wilson unavoidably makes obvious the fact that workers in Russia do the same with their wages as they do here—eke out an existence from pay-day to pay-day. "A man's suit of the lowest price and quality costs £8 17s., a pair of low-grade shoes £1 14s. 6d. Medium quality rayon stockings—only the well-to-do wear the Russian equivalent of nylons—were 16s." He puts the wage rate for an "unskilled worker" at roughly £5 and says "Rents are low. They are fixed

in relation to wages—usually between three and five per cent. of the weekly wage. Even so it takes hard work to provide any margin of extras."

So there are low-grades and high-grades, low-qualities and higher-qualities, the well-to-do and the not so well-to-do.

The first thing to be straight about when ascertaining what social system prevails in any given country, is a definition and an understanding of what constitutes a social system and how to tell one system of society from another.

A system of society is the particular form under which men come together with the means of production and the sum of social relationships arising therefrom at a given stage of historic and material development. The fundamental feature which distinguishes capitalism from all other systems is the relationship of wage labour to capital.

Marx on Capitalism

All kinds of things have been falsely attributed to Karl Marx. Lip-service has been paid to his teachings by those who try to pass as socialists. In Russia his name has been used to justify and bolster up state-capitalism. In the western bloc his name has been dragged through the gutter as a means to discredit something Marx never stood for. Both sides have freely adapted him to suit their ends, to stabilise their positions in the propaganda war.

How few have ever attempted to study the works of Marx and other socialist writers is made plain by the wide-spread confusion of the working-class. Consequent ignorance and confusion make it immensely difficult to put over the real socialist case, and people like Harold Wilson only foster that ignorance and confusion.

Marx spent the better part of his life attacking the wages-system and seeking as we do, its abolition. In "Capital" (William Reeves 5th edition) he asserts:—

"Capital is only produced where the holder of the means of production and of subsistence meets on the market the free labourer who comes there to sell his labour-power, and that single historic condition includes an entirely new world. From that point capital proclaims itself as an epoch of social production."

"That which characterises the capitalist epoch is this, that labour-power acquires for the labourer the form of a commodity which belongs to him, and his labour consequently assumes the form of wage-labour." (page 131-132.)

In "Wage Labour and Capital" Marx wrote:—

"Wages, therefore, are not a share of the worker in the commodities produced by himself. Wages are that part of already existing commodities, with which the capitalist buys a certain amount of productive labour-power." (Page 12. Marx's Italics.)

"If the silkworm's object in spinning were to prolong its existence as caterpillar, it would be a perfect example of a wage-worker." (Page 13.)

After showing how exploitation takes place under capitalism (through the working-class creating greater values than they receive in wages), Marx goes on to say, in his own italics:—

"Capital therefore pre-supposes wage-labour; wage-labour pre-supposes capital. They condition each other; each brings the other into existence." (Page 21.)

The only reason for workers needing a wage packet at the end of the week is because they are a

propertyless class. Owning no means of production they therefore, in order to live, must hire themselves to those who do own. The State is the administrative and coercive apparatus of class rule, and only exists in societies torn with class struggles waged over property in the means of production.

Housing and Hovels

Further similarities between capitalism in Russia and capitalism (State or Private) in the rest of the world come out when Mr. Wilson tells us:—

"I saw some of the houses. Housing is Moscow's black spot.

"In the city centre, a stone's throw from the Kremlin, there are over-crowded hovels far worse than anything in our big cities. In most of these whole families live in a room 15 ft. square. But re-housing is going on fast with skyscrapers springing up. The homes I went to see on a suburban estate were much better."

Looking round the shops and meeting the people Mr. Wilson observes:—"Sunday in a Moscow department store is like Saturday in a British department store." The people he met were not "sinister men with guns in their pockets nor shivering wrecks waiting to be thrown into the salt mines."

The masses there seem to have the standard working-class outlook:—"Next to production, they talked about football."

Mr. Wilson did not say anything about the weighty allegations of the widespread use made of forced labour by the Russian Government and we can well understand that Russian workers who resent the dictatorship may have considered it safer not to express such views to him.

He was there before the sudden removal from office of Beria so we do not know what explanation he would have given for the political set-up that renders such events inevitable.

Perhaps he ponders on how much safer it is to be a Minister administering capitalism in Britain than to be doing the same in Russia. Russia in fact is going through the phase of catching up with capitalism in the Western countries. As Mr. Wilson puts it:—"In a generation they have carried through an industrial revolution that took us 150 years."

Being first to appear the British capitalist-class had it all their own way for a while and could allow the development of more than one party to represent sectional interests of the ruling class, land-owners and industrialists.

Some of the early struggles the workers had here are yet to be won by their fellows in Russia. A good point is made by Mr. Wilson in closing:—"remember that the ordinary people of Russia are just—ordinary people." This can be said for every country in the world.

We want the "ordinary people" i.e., the workers of the world to equip themselves with socialist understanding and put an end to the system that robs them, by bringing about Socialism, a wage-less, class-less world based on common ownership of the means of production.

To this end once again the Socialist Party of Great Britain extends the hand of socialist fraternity to the workers of the world.

H.B.

PARTY NEWS IN BRIEF

Delegate Meeting. The Annual Delegate Meeting will be held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, on Saturday and Sunday, 5th and 6th September. Commencing each day at 11 a.m. A Social and Dance will be held in the Large Conway Hall on the Saturday evening from 7.30 until 11 p.m. Tickets for the dance can be obtained from the Social Committee at Head Office or from Branch Secretaries.

Provincial Tour. A London speaker, Com. Coster, is going to Manchester during the third and fourth weeks in August to assist the Branch in its Summer propaganda. It is hoped that Ashton under Lyme and other Lancashire towns will be visited during this fortnight.

Comrades D'Arcy and May will be visiting the Nottingham area for two weeks during August.

Canada. Comrade Luff of Victoria B.C. has collected £5 10s. and sent it to Head Office to help Party Funds. This is greatly appreciated especially as our Canadian Comrades have their local propaganda to finance.

Correction. In the July issue of the SOCIALIST STANDARD a reference was made to the Mitcham Discussion Group. The impression given was that this was a Party Group. This is not so, but it is a debating Society which Comrade Turner addressed on behalf of the Party.

Internal Party Journal

With next month's issue of FORUM one year of

publication will have been completed. During the summer months there has been a slight reduction in sales, probably because some members are not in regular contact with their branches.

If you have missed some of the earlier issues, you are invited to place a regular order, either with your branch literature secretary or by postal subscription through Head Office (6 months 3s. 9d., 12 months 7s. 6d.). FORUM needs to be read regularly if the significance of references to past articles is not to be lost.

Ealing Branch

Ealing Branch is at present engaged in a further drive to increase the sales of the SOCIALIST STANDARD. A special Branch committee has been formed and good progress is already reported. New areas are being tried for door-to-door canvassing, and extra efforts are being made to extend the number of shops selling the STANDARD. Apart from the shops already supplied, the Branch Committee has succeeded in getting a further twelve to give the paper a trial run. Total Branch sales of the STANDARD are now up to 24 dozen per month.

The Branch has now approved a report from its Propaganda Committee suggesting that it run its own education classes during the next winter season. Starting in October, it is proposed to run weekly classes on economics, and a further series on history is planned for the period after Christmas. Further details will be announced later.

P.H.

SLINGS AND ARROWS

"Rats, Lice and History"

When the news burst upon an incredulous world that fourteen doctors had been arrested in Moscow for plotting to assassinate Soviet leaders; when furthermore these charges were added to by the accusations that they were in the pay or under the influence of international Jewish organisation, the *Daily Worker*, ever faithful to its masters in the Kremlin, rushed into print with stout assertions of the truth of all the charges. They denied that any anti-semitic motives were involved. They fervently expressed their belief that in the Soviet Union innocent people could not be falsely accused and imprisoned. But unfortunately for the *Daily Worker*, within a few months the Russians themselves changed their tune and the doctors were released. Those who had accused them were imprisoned and charged with almost every crime from faking evidence to exacting, by illegal means, confessions from innocent people; from denying civil liberties and violating the Soviet constitution to fomenting racial prejudices. The *Daily Worker*, still faithful to their masters announced with pride that these events proved what safeguards there were in the Soviet Union and forgetting their previous support of the charges against the doctors, joined in denouncing the original accusers.

When strikes broke out in East Berlin, and workers were shot in the streets, when an unemployed worker

was condemned to death and executed within a half hour of sentence being pronounced, once again the *Daily Worker* rushed into print to justify the ruthless savagery with which the workers of Berlin had been treated. Nothing is too vile for the Communists to swallow. Once again their masters had let them down, for Dr. Grotewohl, premier of East Germany, admitted that no amount of outside agitation would have succeeded if there had not already existed in the Soviet Zone "an explosive situation caused by misunderstanding." So much for the *Daily Worker's* accusations that the strikers and rioters were "fascists and riff-raff" sent in by the Americans to foment trouble.

These swift and sudden reversals of attitude should have taught the *Daily Worker* the need for caution. But when the second in command of the Soviet Union was arrested and charged with treason and plotting, and was heaped with the most virulent execration, the *Daily Worker* again came to the defence of the accusers of Beria. "Beria—The Truth," was the headline splashed across the front page. Are they sure it is the truth? Is it not on the cards that the accusers of Beria may shortly be arrested and charged with extorting confessions, and using illegal means as is the case with the doctors? May it not be possible that Beria will be released and this former hero, present scoundrel

(Continued on page 121)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

AUGUST,



1958

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to 'he Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

ARMS AND THE MAN

WAR is not funny, but our war-making rulers are sometimes highly diverting when they try to square their practise with their precepts. The first world war provided us with the spectacle of Christian Cabinet Ministers, Judges and Police using Defence Regulations to prevent Christian Pacifists circulating leaflets containing biblical injunctions against killing and in favour of loving your enemies—on the ground that they were calculated to hinder recruitment.

The present era of cold war and crime waves has led to a Gilbertian situation concerning cosh-boys in khaki. The Prevention of Crimes Act, passed earlier this year, makes it an offence to be in possession of an offensive weapon, without lawful reason, in a public place. The Police soon found occasion to bring suspected lawbreakers into court under the new Act and one of the earliest cases was that of a painter charged at Clerkenwell that "without lawful authority or reasonable excuse" he had with him in a public place an offensive weapon—a pocket knife. (*Evening Standard* 3 July, 1953.) It appeared that he had had a dispute about the change given to him at a mobile canteen but he denied having threatened anyone with the knife (kept by him to clean his paint brushes) and pleaded not guilty to that charge. For damaging a show case he was sent to prison for two months. He was, apparently, allowed to keep his pocket knife but some soldiers at the Central Ammunition Depot near Oswestry were not so lucky, they were ordered to hand in their offensive weapons.

Following stern criticism by Mr. Justice Finnemore at Stafford Assizes on 2nd July, when he sentenced a National Serviceman from the camp for wounding a

man with a knuckle-duster, the Police raided the camp.

"Floorboards were torn up in a search for coshes, sharpened bicycle chains and knuckle-dusters at Nesscliffe Army Camp, Oswestry, Shropshire, yesterday.

"Four hundred men of the Pioneer Corps. were given till noon yesterday to hand in any illegal weapons, or else— By that time one rusty, blunted piece of bicycle chain was handed in." (*Daily Herald*, 4/7/53.)

In the House of Commons on 7th July Mr. Antony Head, Secretary for War, stated that:

"No offensive weapons had been found in the camp. Apart from the two weapons used in the case referred to . . . two coshes had been found on waste land near the camp in November, but their ownership was unknown." (*Manchester Guardian*, 8/7/53.)

Now we need hardly labour the point that surely Mr. Head was telling a downright lie when he said that "no offensive weapons had been found at the camp." If he has been carrying out his job properly, and spending the fabulous sums voted by Parliament for producing offensive weapons in great number, that camp, like all the other camps, should and must be bristling with offensive weapons of horrific destructive power. But the Police, duly instructed on the terms of the Act, were gifted with selective gullets that enable them to strain at a cosh and swallow a tank. Unlike the people in the story who could look at their naked King and believe that he was fully dressed, the Police could look at an arsenal and report it clean, swept and purified of all offensive weapons.

The *Daily Mail* (8/7/53) took the matter up in an editorial, voicing the anxiety of parents of "decent lads from law-abiding homes," at the thought that in the National Service camps the latter might have to mix with men with "criminal habits" armed with knuckle-dusters and the like.

The *Mail* comes down on the side of the law-abiding man and claims for him "a fair chance to go soldiering in clean company."

It possibly does not occur to the *Mail* that the men themselves, if offered the choice, might greatly prefer fighting cosh boys with knuckledusters, to fighting with "legal" weapons against "decent lads" from other countries in the wars engendered by the capitalism that the *Mail* supports.

SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Please send SOCIALIST STANDARD for 12 months (6 months, 2/9) for which 5/6 is enclosed.

Name
(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

(State if renewal or new subscriber.)

SLINGS & ARROWS—continued from page 119

become the future hero? Another question poses itself. Will the *Daily Worker* issue any guarantee as to the integrity of any Soviet leader, and why is it that when the Communists choose leaders, almost one by one they turn out to be traitors?

Let it be remembered when next the *Daily Worker* and the Communist Party pretend to represent the interests of the workers, that they are prepared to defend and also to perpetrate any infamy as long as it suits the Russian ruling class. They demonstrated this in their support, opposition, and then support of the War; they showed this when they condemned striking miners at Grimethorpe, and they have shown this in their support of the shooting down of strikers in East Berlin. And also be it remembered that when workers struck for more tolerable conditions, the Russians showed themselves to be as ruthless, as anti-working class as any state they term "Capitalist cannibals," but whose treatment of workers they not only emulate but surpass.

Readers may remember that before the war a book was published dealing with the effects of plague-carrying vermin on history. We apologise for stealing its title for this paragraph but could think of nothing more apt.

Who are the Workers?

Who has not heard the assertion that the workers are those who do the least work, and constantly demand more money for less effort? Many and varied have been the appeals for increased production, harder work, wage freezes and so on. Yet, although some sections of the working-class have responded nobly to the call, others have turned a deaf ear and pointed out that increased production coupled with wage freezes mean only more dividends for the bosses, and eventual unemployment for themselves. It is to such curmudgeons that we quote the example of a man who has not one job but well over a gross. Mr. J. Arthur Rank, according to the City Man's Diary in the *Evening Standard* (July 14th, 1953) is a director of one hundred and eighty seven companies. In the face of such supreme effort can any worker fail to give of his best?

The City Man with a fine show of industry himself, works out that if Mr. Rank does a forty hour week he is able to devote 12½ minutes to each company providing he does nothing else. "Over a year, allowing him a month's holiday he could spend one and a quarter days on average on the affairs of each company."

You miners who labour in the bowels of the earth, you stokers who work in hot furnace rooms, you clerks who become prematurely bent over your ledgers and all you who bemoan your lot; you with only one job to do and forty or forty-eight hours in the week to do it in spare a thought and perhaps a tear for the man who has one hundred and eighty seven jobs, all of them vital and important, and who can only devote 12½ minutes to each in the week. Think with awe and respect of a man who is such a genius that he can direct the fortunes of all those companies in as little time almost as it takes to make a cup of tea. No wonder he is the

wealthy Mr. Rank, while we wallow in the poverty of only one job.

Jolly Old Pals

At every General Election since the war, the Labour Party has claimed support on many grounds. Not least of these is the claim that a Labour Government would minimise industrial strife and that the Unions would get such a square deal from their pals in the Labour Government, that strikes would become extinct as a method for settling industrial disputes. They made our flesh creep with tales of what would happen in the event of the return of a Tory Government. Those who remembered the past might well be forgiven for believing these tales.

Just as other claims made by the Labour Party have been exposed as sham and hollow, so this one has received a nasty blow and from none other than Mr. Arthur Deakin, General Secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union. At the Annual Conference of the Union Mr. Deakin rose to defend himself against the charge that he had said the Tories were not all "a bad bunch." He admitted expressing these sentiments but continued:—

"With Sir Walter Monckton as Minister of Labour we have had a square deal, and done things which were difficult to do when our own people were in that position." (*Manchester Guardian*, 16/7/53.)

Not for the first time has a Trade Union leader discovered that whatever the intentions of his friends in a Labour Government may be, the task of administering capitalism, as well as political considerations, compel a Mr. George Isaacs to say "no," where a Sir Walter Monckton would say "yes." And in reverse the Trade Union leader would not wish to put his friends in a difficult position by threatening action, where he could use that weapon on a Tory Minister with possibly good effect.

Will we see Arthur Deakin and others stumping the country asking support for Tories, because they give a "square deal"? What will happen to the Labour Party then?

Without Comment

"Would not the Prime Minister agree that the only way to improve the standards of living of the backward races and to avert economic world disaster is to allow all peoples to buy in the cheapest and sell in the dearest markets because if goods cannot cross frontiers, armies will. Will he set the people free?" Sir Waldron Smithers.

Answer by the Prime Minister: "Those seem to me, on the whole, to be unobjectionable sentiments." S.A.

DELEGATE MEETING SOCIAL AND DANCE

at
CONWAY HALL
RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1.
on
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th, 1953, 7.30—11 p.m.
Tickets **2/-**

CAPITAL'S CORONATION

SINCE we may not, without dire consequences to the life of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, record our view on what has been called "the greatest show ever," we may at least refer readers to what our late and lamented comrade Jacomb wrote on the occasion of the crowning of George Wettin as King George V. (See SOCIALIST STANDARD for June 1911.)

Those to whom it may seem remarkable that in spite of 10 years of devastating war there should be such a tremendous increase of wealth as illustrated by the present show, should bear in mind that with production and consumption of war material at top scale and speed profits and fortunes for factory owners and shareholders who formed this vast congregation of titled gentlemen and bejewelled ladies, were correspondingly big and easily capable of defraying whatever cost participation in the show involved.

And what have those who produced this vast wealth and fought for king and country in the past great and glorious wars to end war, what improvement in their material position have they to show in these 30 years of peace and 10 years of war?

If in writing on the show in June, 1911, our late comrade Jacomb referred among other things to

"... the bestowing of a meal upon thousands of little children whom hunger makes glad to accept even such a trifle from hands so heavy-laden with wealth that they cannot feel the weight of the charitable grains they scatter, ..."

here is what a London daily paper reported in connection with the 1953 show:—

"At East Grinstead the children who go to the Coronation party will, after they have had their tea, be stamped on the wrist with indelible ink. This will prevent them from getting more than their share of the refreshments."

R.

NOTES ON "SOLO TRUMPET"

A BOOK has just been published by Lawrence and Wishart which calls for some comments from us because of what it says and what it does not say. The book is "Solo Trumpet" by T. A. Jackson.

In the description of his early days, in the '90's and the beginning of the present century, Jackson gives an authentic picture of working class life at that time and of the struggles to clarify the socialist outlook. So also is his description of the events leading up to the formation of the Scottish Socialist Labour Party and the Socialist Party of Great Britain. Whilst he quite correctly points out that the two groups were dubbed "Impossibilists" at the time, by the leaders of the Social Democratic Federation, he frequently mentions the S.L.P. by name. But nowhere throughout his book does he refer to the S.P.G.B. by name; wherever we are concerned he always uses the old sneer "Impossibilist." Furthermore whilst he is lavish in detail about other parties he does not give any details about the formation of our party. This is curious because Jackson was one of those who left the S.D.F. to take part in the formation of the Party. He was a member of the early Executive Committee, and he spoke for the Party regularly from 1904 until he left in 1909. From page 64 onwards he makes references to the "Impossibilists" but in such a way that at times it is difficult to know whether he is referring to us or to the S.L.P., though he generally refers to the latter under its own name.

The complete silence about the S.P.G.B. is intriguing, particularly since the other parties and groups, about which he has so much to say, are either dead or moribund, apart from the Labour Party which might as well be dead. At the beginning of the Twenties Sylvia Pankhurst told one of our members—Hardy—that instructions had been issued to Communist Party members to have nothing to do with our Party and not even to mention it. Can it be that this ostrich policy still operates?

Jackson gives two reasons for leaving the Party,

though only those who know the circumstances would know who he is writing about. One reason is correct, the other is apparently a face-saving afterthought.

From pages 87 to 91 he explains the circumstances that led him to leave the Party and to become a free-lance speaker. These circumstances were well known to members at the time, and the present writer is not going to throw stones at him for what he did then. He was having a very rough time, was badly on the rocks, was unable to get employment and needed what money he could get as a free-lance speaker in order to obtain the means to live and keep his family. As he himself puts it, he tried all kinds of jobs,

"But a permanent job eluded my seeking. In those circumstances I was driven at last to 'turn professional' and charge a fee for my services as a speaker. This was quite a recognised thing, in those days—indeed just as there were free-lance journalists (whose ranks I tried vainly to join) so there were free-lance Socialist propagandists—who lived wholly or partly upon their earnings as lecturers and propagandists." (page 90.)

That this was the real explanation of his leaving the Party is borne out by letters he wrote to members at the time.

After a short time speaking for the I.L.P. in the West of England he went North to join J. W. Gott of the Freethought-Socialist League. He carried on the agitation for that body in Leeds up to the outbreak of war in 1914. This propaganda he refers to as his "whole Atheistic interlude" which "A stern critic would condemn" and, after some general and footling explanations, he opens the next paragraph with the following statement:—

"In any case, in the purely personal sense I had little choice: It was the only means of living open to me—I had 'burned my boats' and there was no going back." (page 98.)

Surely he has given in his own words the complete explanation of the reason for his leaving the Party and for his subsequent career? Why then does he try to slip in another slant in other parts of his book? For example on page 87 where he writes:—

"Thus, as I had sickened of the doctrinaire rigidity of the 'Impossibilists,' and found both the Hyndmanites and the Macdonaldites hostile to the ideological struggle for Marxism," etc.

Sickness "of the doctrinaire rigidity" had nothing to do with the action he took that burned his boats, but his subsequent activities may have influenced him to change his outlook—if he really has changed it!

Although he refers to the attitude of the B.S.P., the I.L.P., and the S.L.P., on the 1914 war, about which they were hopelessly at sea, he makes no reference to the opposition of the S.P.G.B. which was stated in clear terms immediately the war broke out. If he did not know this at the time he must have known it soon after. He tells us that he was in Leeds at the time war broke out and that it came as an unexpected shock, leaving himself, and the various organisations with which he was associated, groping in the dark.

In the course of his book he speaks very well of two members of the Party who have passed out—Fitzgerald and Baritz—but refers to them as belonging to the "Impossibilists." He tells a humorous story of one of Baritz's escapades in Manchester, when he climbed on to a roof to blow a horrible clarinet obligato through a ventilator shaft while Hyndman was speaking at an indoor meeting. The story is funnier still when one realizes that Baritz was perfectly serious. Jackson refers to Fitzgerald as the man who took him through Marxian Economics and writes very appreciatively of him. It may interest him to know that Fitzgerald always had a regard for him, in spite of the line he took. He is mistaken in thinking that he and George Hicks (another ex-member of the Party) were the only two "outsiders" at Fitzgerald's funeral; there were others.

GILMAC.

KENYA AND BERLIN

Enemy of an Enemy

Cardinal Richelieu was credited with basing his foreign policy on the maxim "the enemy of my enemy is my friend." The capitalist groups in the modern world work on the same slogan. In present world conditions Russian capitalism and its allies in the Soviet bloc, is in conflict with the capitalists of the Western world. The latter in their turn are engaged in struggles against the working class in each of the Western countries. Therefore the working class of the Western countries are the potential allies of the Russian rulers. This is the reason why the Russian rulers hold themselves out as the friend of "the toilers of Britain and America," and try to enlist the sympathy of the latter by means of the Communist Parties in those countries. The assiduity with which the Communist Party of Great Britain has built up the legend of "The Jolly George"—in which incident the workers of Britain are supposed to have prevented the British ruling class pursuing the war against the Bolsheviks in the early days of the Russian Revolution—shows, in spite of the fact that the story as related by them is not true, the direction in which their thoughts are moving. For the Russian rulers realise that, however powerful the Anglo-American ruling class might be, it could not, without the active support of the British and American workers, embark successfully on any war against the Soviet Union.

Vast Subversive Network

On the same principle, the ruling class of Britain and America show great sympathy for the oppressed workers in the countries under Soviet regimes, and try to stir up discontent and organise opposition. In the conditions obtaining in the Stalinist countries, this work has to be done underground, in exactly the same way as the Communist Parties have to work secretly in many western countries, among them Spain and Portugal, some of the South American republics, and (to an increasing degree) the United States itself. Thus an article in the "Readers' Digest" of October, 1952, says "West Berlin, an enclave deep in the Soviet Zone, continues to be headquarters for a vast subversive network radiating throughout Red Germany, warning

police officials of the punishment in store for them, smuggling refugees to the West, ceaselessly distributing propaganda."

Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder

But, one need scarcely add, the sympathy felt by the ruling class of Russia, and of Britain and America, for the struggle of the workers against their masters, stops at their own boundaries. The workers of an enemy country are fit subjects for sympathy; but never the workers of your own. Chapter and verse for these statements can be found in the recent events in Kenya and East Berlin. When in East Berlin and other German cities, on June 16th and 17th, the workers turned on their masters and protested by mass demonstrations against their wages and working conditions, the German Stalinist police, supported by Russian tanks and machine-guns, suppressed the demonstrations by force, killing a number of demonstrators. This was the signal for a barrage of sympathy from the rulers of the Western world. Dr. Adenauer said, "betraying deep emotion," that "even in a cynical age there were still men prepared to die in the streets for an idea. They did not fear Russian tanks and machine-guns; they had shown to the world that they would not be slaves, and that the age of tyranny was over." (*The Times*, 24-6-53; subsequent references are also to *The Times*, unless otherwise stated.) In Parliament Mr. Maclean, a Conservative, called the Russian action a "barbarous massacre" (25-6-53); and a group of Labour members tabled a motion reading: "That this House notes with intense interest and deep sympathy the struggle of the German workers against the Russian military dictatorship in Eastern Germany and deplores the execution without trial of the leaders thrown up by the workers in the struggle for bread and liberty" (24-6-53). Mr. Dulles, the American Secretary of State, found that the episode "demonstrates that the people do retain their love of God and love of country and their sense of personal dignity. They want to run their own affairs and not be run from Moscow. The unquenchable spirit of the people was dramatised in East Berlin, where unarmed youths tore up paving stones from the streets to hurl in defiance at tanks... The people want to

be governed by those whom they select as responsive to their needs and desires, rather than to be ruled by those who take their orders from aliens and who give their orders with a view to achieving their own ambitions without regard to the welfare of the people concerned" (1-7-53).

Kenya

If this is the attitude taken by the Western rulers to the events in East Berlin, why do not they deliver the same kind of stirring speeches about the disturbances in Kenya? Mr. Dulles thinks the East Germans want to run their own affairs; but the East Germans are at least allowed the semblance of free elections (skilfully manipulated though they may be by Herr Ulbricht and his friends) whereas in Kenya the Kikuyu and other Africans are openly barred from the franchise. A defender of the attitude of the Anglo-American ruling class might say that the two cases were different; the Kikuyu, in rebelling, did not stop short at peaceful demonstrations, but actually killed those whom they thought were oppressing them. The answer to this is—so did the East Germans: a number of police and state-officials were reported shot or beaten to death during the riots of June 16th and 17th (1-7-53). And this should cause no surprise; when workers are driven to desperation point, be their skins black or white, they often try to seek escape by using violence against individual members of the oppressing class or their hirelings.

Savagery

But again it might be alleged (by a supporter of the British ruling class) that the behaviour of Mau Mau adherents in Kenya has shown them to be savages at heart, and to be therefore beyond the sympathy of "civilised" men. But this is the last argument which could be used by members of the British ruling class. If individual acts of barbarity are to blacken for ever the character of the nations to which their perpetrators belong, and place those nations for ever beyond the pale of civilisation and civilised rights, then why this sympathy and support for the Germans? These Germans are exactly the same as those against whom our rulers were lashing us into furious enmity only eight years ago, on the grounds of the savagery, the barbarity, the bestiality they had shown in the treatment of minorities inside Germany and of the populations of the occupied countries. Our rulers cannot now ignore the six years of unending propaganda with which they overwhelmed us in the second world war. The truth is that neither the East Germans nor the Kikuyu are any more brutal by nature than other human beings, though some of them have been driven by oppression

and bad conditions into brutality (as were the East Germans on June 16th and 17th, and as the Kikuyu have been from time to time since a year ago).

"Fatherland of the Proletariat"

Just as East Berlin has shown up the hypocrisy of the rulers of the Western world, so it has shown up the hypocrisy of the Stalinist leaders. The Communist Parties of the world claim to be parties of the workers, organised in the interest of the workers; the Communist Parties of the Soviet Union and the other Soviet countries are always to the fore with denunciations of "capitalist oppression" whenever the workers of the Western world are suppressed by force. In East Berlin the German and Russian Bolsheviks had the opportunity to show how they themselves deal with similar situations; and the outcome was as one would expect, for no capitalist system, whether its superstructure is of the Stalinist or the Western kind, can tolerate insubordination among its workers. By using the rifle, the machine-gun, and the tank against striking and rioting workers, the Stalinists have once more demonstrated the division between the master class and the working class in the countries under their control.

Worse Than Useless

The Socialist attitude to these events can be explained in a few words. While we have sympathy with workers who are driven to break out in open violence, whether against Stalinist or a western ruling class, the killing of individual members of a ruling class does nothing at all to alter the economic basis of society; so long as that basis is unchanged, so long will there be a master class and a working class. Acts of violence on the part of the workers merely provoke the ruling class and its armed forces, and give it the excuse for bloody reprisals. In Eastern Germany, scores of workers are reported to have been killed; in Kenya, the "security forces" boasted that in three days last month they had killed a hundred "terrorists," which is far more than the total number of whites killed by the Mau Mau since the beginning of the troubles (27-6-53). When workers become Socialists, they use their resentment at their conditions to spur them on towards ending the society that causes them, not in sporadic and pointless acts of violence. The Western leaders claim to be opposed to violence and murder as political weapons; but they reveal themselves as double-dealers when they incite the workers in Stalinist countries to use these weapons, although they know that the result can only be a slaughter among those who try to fight their political battles in the streets.

A.W.E.

HUMAN NATURE AND SOCIALISM

4—Capitalist Patterns of Behaviour

IN previous articles we have seen that, although men do, in a very real sense, make history, they are nevertheless also products of conditions and creatures of circumstance. Since we are primarily concerned with the possibilities of change that exist today, we should discover as much as we can about the sort of human

behaviour that is produced by Capitalism. Provided that we bear in mind the limitations of the phrase, we may enquire what sort of "human nature" has resulted, so that we may more adequately see the respects in which change is both possible and desirable.

Every society, no matter the form of its social

relationships, presupposes that men engage in productive activity. The way in which they come together to produce wealth (the economic aspect) is the key to all the other aspects of society. The basic question to ask, then, is: how does man work under Capitalism?

The outstanding feature of present-day labour is that the bulk of it is undertaken, not primarily to satisfy a human need, but to satisfy something interposed between production and consumption called a market. Everything is dominated by the basis of the system which recognises only motives of material gain. A tailor, for example, can no longer appeal to society's need of clothing as a justification of his existence. He has to say that tailoring is one way of "making a living." He is considered a "successful" tailor, not because he makes good clothes for people, but only when he achieves an income remarkably large for a tailor. The cash nexus, not need, is the determining factor, since, without money, access to both the means and the fruits of production is denied.

False Separation

There are a number of consequences of this economic set-up that constitute a condemnation of present arrangements and a challenge to make better ones. First, there is the separation of the individual's interests from those of the community as a whole. The objective of the employee in selling his working abilities is to receive a pay-packet "for himself." The objective of the employer in buying those abilities is to reap a profit "for himself." Both may, of course, form temporary alliances with others of their class but, within Capitalism, each worker is a potential (if not an actual) rival to every other worker seeking employment, and each capitalist a rival to every other capitalist seeking profit.

Production under Capitalism is social, not individual, yet the worker does not labour primarily because in doing so he renders a service to the community. Lacking access to the means of production, he is compelled to become "gainfully" employed. He gets back in wages part of the value of what he produces, and the employer gets his profit out of the remainder. The conflict between "capital" and "labour" arising out of the capitalists' ownership of the means of production and distribution constitutes the class struggle. It is entirely out of place to apportion blame to either capitalist or worker for their "selfish" conduct. Nor is it helpful to suggest a reconciliation between classes while consenting to the continuation of a system that makes the gain of one class the loss of another.

Capitalist division of labour is objectionable because it makes harmful separations in the productive process. Production is separated from consumption, enjoyment from work, mental labour from physical labour. These separations lead to antagonisms, and the function that should be an integrated whole is divided against itself. Thus the producer of wealth who demands more wages is castigated for making the "consumer" suffer higher prices. The worker who takes his ideas from capitalist propagandists is encouraged to vent his frustration as producer on to the consumer, and his frustration as consumer on to the producer—and the underlying, but real cause of the trouble is ignored.

The aim of the employer is to make the human labour power that he has bought as productive as possible. All kinds of aids to intensified exploitation are introduced, so that the maximum amount of profit is achieved in the shortest possible time. It is a matter of little concern that the conditions of work are such that all joy is taken from it, and the worker comes to look upon it as an evil necessity. The remedy applied, under Capitalism, for this deplorable state of affairs is not, as one might reasonably hope, the adjustment of the work to the needs of the worker as a human being, though industrial psychology whitewashes its economic motives by pretending to do this. Instead a substitute—leisure—is found for the satisfaction that is lacking in capitalist employment. Tied to unpleasant, boring and socially useless jobs, people are encouraged to make their non-working hours the centre of their lives, the part that they "look forward to." But you cannot switch on a human being as you can a machine, and so the way in which the hours of employment are spent inevitably has its effects on the ways of spending leisure. Regimented and controlled at the factory or office, the worker tends to lose the desire to participate actively in his own amusement, and all too often relies on mass-produced entertainment to be sold to him.

Impersonality and Excessive Specialisation

As a consequence of the commodity function placed upon human labour power, personal worth is reduced to exchange value. Everyone has his price, not only for what he does but for what he is. Human relationships are regarded as the subject of calculated business transactions ("what does he want in return?") and are lacking in all dignity. The situation is well described by Hortense Powder maker in "Hollywood—The Dream Factory":—

"Man has become increasingly lonely. Although people live in close physical contact, their relationships have become more and more depersonalised. We have a sense of being with people, and yet do not feel in any way related to them. The technique of business and many other organisations in trying to personalise their selling relationships, such as by announcing the name of employees to customers, really fools no one. The fact that the name of the post office clerk, the bank teller or the person who handles complaints in the department store, is posted does not really influence their relationship with customers. The market place is still basically impersonal."

Perhaps the greatest denial of human characteristics is the excessive specialisation of function that Capitalism has developed. In earlier societies man was able to combine in one person many different functions and, in relation to his society, his development was many-sided. The craftsman in feudal times had the satisfaction of making whole articles, and his work held interest and pleasure for him because he could clearly appreciate the social value of what he produced. Today the worker rarely makes a whole article or gives a service that is wanted, not for business, but for its own sake. He is part of a machine for producing wealth and, like all machines, he must be made to function as "efficiently" as possible. Thus the multifarious operations required in the production of a motor-car for competitive sale must, as Ford has shown, be broken down into their simplest component parts; so that the ultimate aim is that the worker shall

make only one movement as frequently as possible.

Throughout the whole range of capitalist employment the accent lies on paying attention almost exclusively to a small section of the whole economic process, which involves a failure to comprehend that it forms a segment of a much wider field. Few men have first-hand experience of any productive activity outside their own jobs—they come to rely more and more on the services of "specialists."

Symptoms of Maladjustment

What sort of cultural "superstructure" arises from this falsely separated, depersonalised and excessively specialised mode of production? In the short space of this article we can only touch upon a few aspects of present society, and show that they are given their character by the capitalist system. We read, for example, in Margaret Mead's "Male and Female," of "... the cultural meaning of prostitution and promiscuous homosexuality, venereal disease, acute alcoholism, and sex crimes. These all occur, and their form and frequency are indices of the maladjustment that exists in the United States, as in every modern society. They are symptoms of the state of society, just as the phobias and compulsions of the patient are symptoms. They are systematically related to the culture."

When we compare this approach to the one that seeks to lay blame for society's ills on the individual's wickedness, we can see how much more rational the former is. The solution, we perceive, is not to complain that there are "problem" people in the world who must be reformed, but to tackle the cause of the problem in the world itself. The dualism that charac-

terises everything under Capitalism—buyer and seller, employee and employer, competition and monopoly, work and leisure—is perhaps most apparent in the gulf between the theory of what should be and the practice of what is. This is aptly illustrated by Bergen Evans in "The Natural History of Nonsense":—

"We are brought up to expect rewards for certain kinds of behaviour and then thrown into a world in which none of the signals works. We are taught as children to be kind, self-sacrificing, and helpful, never to be greedy or aggressive. Then we must live in a ruthlessly competitive economy. We are taught to be honest, in preparation for a world in which honesty is often penalized, and dishonesty, in a thousand forms, is often rewarded. Our ambition is stimulated and we are assured of success if we will only 'apply ourselves,' when actually, by the very nature of things, nine out of ten must be disappointed, and chance carries as much weight as merit."

"The result is mass frustration and despair."

* * * * *

Such is the capitalist environment into which we are born. Yet, in spite of it all, people do, on the whole, manage to be kind, unselfish, helpful and honest, and their greed and aggressiveness is mostly the reaction to unfortunate circumstances. It is certain that if such a disunited, contradictory, and anarchical system as Capitalism can hold people together in society, then one which is designed to harmonise with their needs will not fail because of the frailty of human nature.

S.R.P.

(Next Article: We Learn From Social Scientists.)

WHAT IS RELIGION?

MOST people think they know what religion is, but nearly everybody has different ideas, even more so than with economic terms like Socialism, Capitalism, etc.

The pamphlet "Socialism and Religion" published by the party in 1911, and reprinted in 1925, and since then out of print, states that the fundamental idea of religion is a belief in the persistence of life after death. It goes on to say "Originally, and in essence throughout, religion is a belief in the existence of supernatural beings, and the observance of rites and ceremonies in order to avert their anger or gain their good-will. 'Corpse-worship' as it has been tersely called, is the protoplasm of religion." This is more a description of the salient points of religion than a definition.

In the chapter on religion in the pamphlet "Questions of the Day" the following statement on religion occurs at its commencement "Religion is woven like a thread into the texture of human society from early times to the present day. It is based upon man's ignorance of natural forces and has been propped up by rulers as a means of keeping slaves in subjection." This again is scarcely a definition, but explains (quite correctly) what religion does.

Marx's well-known statement that "Religion is the opiate of the people" (or a more correct translation "opium for the people,") which occurs in his letters to Kugelmann and his essay on Hegel, is scarcely a definition, but rather a statement on an aspect of religion.

Thousands of divines have had a shot at giving a definition of religion, but most of them define religion as "appreciating God's love to mankind" or "accepting

Jesus as our Saviour," etc. All such ideas could never be accepted as a basis of discussion if we wished to examine religion and its influence.

Matthew Arnold defined religion as "Morality touched with emotion." But Matthew Arnold was himself touched with religion, and therefore somewhat unreliable.

One thing is very certain, and that is that all ideas of religion are bound up with belief in God or gods. God of some kind is essential to religion, and next to a God or gods, something which God does, i.e., performs miracles, gives us or promises after life, writes or inspires men to write religious literature, and accepts prayers from those he has made or created. Religion, then can be said to consist of five things:—

1. Belief in God or gods.
2. Belief in Miracles.
3. Belief in Life after Death.
4. Belief in the Efficacy of Prayer.
5. Belief in Holy or Inspired Books.

It is true that not all religions have all these five characteristics. Buddhism for instance does not have a personal God or Deity as does the Christian religion and in that sense can be claimed as somewhat Agnostic although not Atheistic. But most religions have these characteristics, while Christianity—that cemetery of dead religions—is endowed with them all.

We do not place these in order of their importance, although everything emanates from the Belief in God or gods.

(To be continued.)

H. JARVIS.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire. Sec. c/o 29, Lincoln Ave., Belfast, N. Ireland.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

ISLINGTON BRANCH LECTURES

at

Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7

Thursday, 6th August

Branch Discussion — E. Willmott

Thursday, 27th August

"The Class Struggle" — A. Turner

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING

at

Islington Central Library, Holloway Road, N.7

Wednesday, 19th August

"Why are Prices High?" — E. Hardy.

Reading

Will members and sympathisers interested in forming a group in this district please write to J. A. O'Brien, 31, Frensham Green, Shinfield Rise, Reading.

Transport Workers

Will Party members employed by the L.T.E., interested in co-operating to extend Socialist propaganda amongst transport workers, please get in touch with Frank P. Dunne, 17, St. Mary's Grove, Canonbury, N.1.

BLOOMSBURY BRANCH

Will members and sympathisers please note that there will be no Branch meetings during August. The first meeting in September will be held on Thursday, 3rd September.

SOUTH WALES

Will readers of the "Socialist Standard" in the Swansea, Lougher, Llanelly and Gorseinon areas get in contact with the Secretary of the Swansea Group for the purpose of arranging a meeting to discuss the policy of the S.P.G.B.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN AUGUST

Wednesdays: Goslett Yard, (off Charing Cross Road.), 8.30 p.m.

Thursdays: Notting Hill Gate, 8 p.m.

Fridays: Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.
White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11 a.m.
East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.
Clapham Common, 2.30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Exmouth Market.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

CROYDON BRANCH

The following lectures will be given at 8 p.m. at RUSKIN HOUSE, Wellesley Rd., Croydon (near W. Croydon Stn.).

Aug. 5th G. Brynolf, "Russian Capitalism."

Aug. 19th H. Jarvis, "Capitalism and Food."

Sept. 2nd, "An open Forum on Trade Unions."

You and your friends are cordially invited.

TO MEMBERS AND SYMPATHISERS

Will members and sympathisers interested in the formation of a branch of the Party in the Hammersmith district please communicate with B. Flitter, 17 Chiswick Village, W.4.

READ ALSO—

THE

WESTERN SOCIALIST

The Journal of Scientific Socialism in the Western Hemisphere. Published jointly by the W.S.P. of the United States and the Socialist Party of Canada.

Per issue 6d. (Post free 7½d.)

Postal Subscription Rate :

6 issues 3/9 ; 12 issues 7/6

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Blackfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 12th and 26th August, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 85, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 7 Paradise Street, Rugby.

SWANSEA.—D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2, (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m., 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hallard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.13.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 7.30 p.m. St. Peter's London Road, Wickford. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Boreford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. No meetings in August. (3rd and 17th September), Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., E. M. P. Hirst, c/o H.O., 52 Clapham High Street.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellingley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 55, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6. (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Aikenshead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 3rd, 17th, 31st August, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to A. Ivemey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 155, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 p.m., discussion after Branch business. "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Illington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. P. Hart, 54, Ashdale House, N.4.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec., 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. 9 Vicarage Rd, Kingston (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 11th and 25th August at 7.45 p.m., Land o' Cakes Hotel Lever St., Manchester, 4. Sec. J. M. Breakley, 2, Denmark Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 589 Vol. 49 Sept., 1953

THE STRIKES IN FRANCE

HUMAN NATURE AND
SOCIALISM

STRIKE SMASHING IN
NEW ZEALAND

WHAT IS RELIGION?

THE NATURE OF WAR

THE PASSING SHOW

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

Who are the Victors in Korea?

Korean Armistice

AFTER three years of war—the last two years of it accompanied by bargaining between the leaders of the two sides—an armistice has been signed in Korea. As the smoke drifts away from the last shell and the last bomb, as the last wounded are taken to hospital and the last dead are buried, the conflict is continued in the statements put out by each side. The boastfulness of the United Nations leaders claiming that the war has ended in a victory for them is equalled only by the boastfulness of the Russian and Chinese Governments claiming the same thing. But what are the real results of the war? Who has gained, and who has lost?

PUBLIC MEETING

at
CONWAY HALL, RED LION SQUARE,
HOLBORN, W.C.1

at 7 p.m. on
SUNDAY, 6th SEPTEMBER, 1953

London and Provincial Speakers
Admission Free

The balance-sheet

On the Soviet side the war was fought by the soldiers of China and North Korea. On the United Nations side, the troops were supplied by South Korea, the United States, and sixteen other nations. One has only to read the casualty-lists to know that the peoples of these countries, at any rate, lost by the war. The Commonwealth countries lost one thousand dead and five times that number wounded and prisoners. The Americans had twenty-three thousand dead, and more than a hundred thousand wounded. The casualties of the Chinese and North Korean armies have been estimated at two million (*The Times*, 28-7-53; references which follow are also to *The Times* unless otherwise indicated). As for the North Korean people, they were subjected to one of the heaviest bombardments of modern times by American planes; and of the ten million North Koreans at the beginning of the war, John Foster Dulles, the U.S. Secretary of State, now calculates that

one in three have died as a result of the war (28-7-53). It is difficult to find an estimate of the South Korean casualties, but they can scarcely be low, since the original South Korean Army was largely destroyed in the first North Korean advance; and towards the end of the war the South Korean Army, reconstituted by the Americans, was holding three-quarters of the line and was bearing the brunt of repeated Chinese attacks. Altogether, some five million people, at the very least, must have died in the Korean peninsula as the result of the war.

Not tomb enough

After three years of modern war, what is the gain and loss of territory? On the eastern side of the peninsula, the South Korean border has been pushed northwards to include about two thousand five hundred square miles of former North Korean land; on the western side, the Communists have gained about a thousand square miles. On balance, the United Nations have gained some fifteen hundred square miles—less than two per cent. of the area of Korea. It works out at more than three thousand people killed for each square mile of territory won. The net gain of territory is hardly enough to bury the dead. This is indeed

a plot.

Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
which is not tomb enough and continent
To hide the slain.

Price per year: Three thousand million dollars

The position in Korea now was outlined by an appeal on behalf of the United Nations Association Relief Fund (29-7-53). Of the people of Korea, it said, "Two and three-quarter million are refugees. Four million are destitute. Their homes and industries have been wrecked. Seventy per cent. of their agricultural implements have been destroyed, and over half the country's rice-growing lands lie idle." These figures are tragically significant especially when it is remembered that at the beginning of the war the total population of Korea was only about twenty millions. No less than three thousand million dollars' worth of ammunition was used every year in the Korean fighting—and this

means that factories and manpower were devoted to producing this vast quantity of bombs and shells instead of producing goods which the people of the world need. In a reasonable economic system this amount of productive capacity could have been devoted to consumer goods. But the facts remind us of the tremendous productive potentialities which must either remain latent or be used for destructive purposes under the capitalist system of society; we can only use the world's productive power fully for our benefit under Socialism.

The gainers

Who then gains from the Korean war? The Chinese and the American ruling classes have both gained to some extent. Neither has conquered and brought within its own sphere of influence the other half of Korea; but each has saved its own share for itself. In a future war China could use its Korean foothold to attack Japan, and America has kept South Korea as a base for any future assault on China. And each side has kept part of the valuable Korean mineral supply—gold, copper, coal, iron, mica and bauxite are all found in the peninsula. We have recently had a powerful reminder that the need for such raw materials, and the need for markets, does motivate foreign policy, in a speech delivered in America:—

A total struggle—let us never forget it—calls for a total defence . . . Again and again, we must remind ourselves that this is a matter not only of political principle but of economic necessity. It involves our need for markets for our agricultural and industrial products, our need to seek in return from the rest of the world such essentials as manganese and cobalt, tin and tungsten (11/6/53).

The speaker was President Eisenhower, who should know.

The Socialist attitude

To Socialists, Korea is a demonstration of the brutality of capitalist states struggling among themselves; a reminder that war is the only final arbiter of the differences which are inevitable under capitalism; and a foretaste of what is in store if the rulers of each side decide on another "big" war.

A.W.E.

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY

THE five men were silhouetted against the bright, grey, morning sky as they walked steadily, in single file, with spades and shovels on their shoulders, up the gentle slope of the hillside. They halted and gathered in a group, talking, gesticulating, looking around and pointing. Then they walked away in a different direction and were lost to sight behind the hill.

It was the first day of April in the year 1649. The five men were quite ordinary humble artisans or labourers, living in the village of Cobham, in Surrey. Only one of them had any reputation outside the locality in which they lived; William Everard had been cashiered from the army—from Oliver Cromwell's army—and was known for his religious zeal. Stewer and Colten were well known locally but the other two had so little fame that their names have not been handed down to us.

On the lower slopes of St. George's Hill, on the

side by Camp Close, the men spent the day digging, breaking the soil into a fine tilth and sowing parsnips, carrots and beans. When their work was finished they gathered up their tools and made their way back to their homes. That simple day's work had far-reaching results and qualified the five men for honourable mention in every worth-while history of the working class.

The following Monday they were back at their digging in the same place, accompanied by nine or ten new recruits. By Friday the group was over thirty strong. On Saturday they went to Kingston-on-Thames to furnish themselves with seed corn and they arranged to have ploughs for their future work.

On the 16th of April, Henry Sanders of Walton-on-Thames, a local landowner, reported these doings to the Council of State. The Council of State instructed the commander-in-chief of the army, General Fairfax, to send a force of horse troops to Cobham to dispel this "Disorderly and tumultuous" assembly whilst it

was still a beginning and before more dangerous consequences grew.

The men of Cobham, together with others who had followed their example at near-by Walton-on-Thames, offered no resistance to the soldiers. They were pacifists. They were arrested and the leaders, Gerrard Winstanley and William Everard, were taken before Cromwell and Fairfax at Whitehall. They stood before the Lord General with their hats on, claiming that he was but their fellow man.

They stated that for many years the people had lived under oppression and tyranny. The remedy was to cultivate the wastelands, the common land and the parks, everyone working and living communally. They did not intend to touch any private land or to break any fence or enclosure, only to till the common and untitled land.

Another local landowner, a Mr. Drake, summonsed them and they were tried by a jury of local wealthy freeholders at Kingston Court in August, 1649. They were not allowed to defend themselves and were all fined £10 each. Their cattle were injured by hired ruffians. A Puritan preacher was sent to Cobham to stir the local population against them. The few huts that they had erected were pulled down, their spades and hoes were cut to pieces, the land they had dug and sown was torn and trampled so that no corn could grow, the men themselves were maltreated.

For over a year the settlement at Cobham persisted. Propagandists were sent out to other parts of the country and another settlement was commenced at Wellingborough and some support was found in Buckinghamshire and Northamptonshire. But the support was slight and after a year of digging and a year of persecution the movement died out in early 1651.

The members of this movement called themselves the "True Levellers" but because of their experiment at Cobham and elsewhere they became better known as "The Diggers." The prime motivator of the movement, Gerrard Winstanley, was a cloth manufacturer. He continued his activities after the Digger movement had faded out and during the last years of his life he was a member of "The Society of Friends," better known as "The Quakers," which had been founded by George Fox in 1652. A number of other members of the Digger movement likewise joined the Quakers, and continued to suffer for their beliefs.

During the 16th century and the early part of the 17th the early merchant capitalists in England had been gaining in numbers, wealth and political power. Their struggle against their feudal class enemies culminated in open hostilities between themselves, entrenched in the Parliament, and the Feudal Aristocracy lined up behind the Monarchy. Both sides resorted to armed force, and the Parliamentary troops under Oliver Cromwell, Thomas Fairfax and Henry Ireton finally triumphed over the Royal forces under King Charles I and Prince Rupert. The king was beheaded without having abdicated, as evidence that it was the monarchy and all it stood for that was defeated and not merely the king.

The wealthy capitalists raised their troops from amongst the small merchants and artisans of the towns and from the ranks of the small working class of those days. To ensure support from these social elements

they were fed on propaganda for religious and political freedom. In the Parliamentary army, amongst the small merchant and artisan element, there grew up a movement known as "The Levellers" which demanded a political freedom in excess of what the wealthier capitalists were prepared to admit. An extreme section of the Leveller movement, supported mainly by agricultural workers and calling itself the "True Levellers" demanded a form of utopian communism. The digging experiment was an attempt at propaganda-by-deed by this extreme element.

In an age of pamphleteering, Winstanley and other diggers supplied many pamphlets. Their writings are cloaked in religious phrases for it was a time of religious fervour. Yet they saw clearly that there could be no real freedom whilst there was private property.

"True freedom lies where a man receives his nourishment and preservation, and that is in the use of the earth . . . A man had better to have no body than to have no food for it . . . True freedom lies in the free enjoyment of the earth."

(Winstanley. The law of Freedom.)

They recognised the real function of religion as propounded by the church.

"While men are gazing up to heaven, imagining after a happiness or fearing a hell after they are dead, their eyes are put out, that they see not what is their birthrights, and what is to be done by them here on earth while they are living . . . And indeed the subtle clergy do know that if they can but charm the people . . . to look after riches, heaven and glory when they are dead, that then they shall easily be the inheritors of the earth and have the deceived people to be their servants. This . . . was not the doctrine of Christ."

(Winstanley. The law of Freedom.)

They saw the real cause of war and, vaguely, of class struggles.

"property and single interest divides the people of a land and the whole world into parties, and is the cause of all wars and bloodshed and contention everywhere."

(Winstanley. The True Levellers' Standard Advanced.)

" . . . Rich men receive all they have from the labourer's hand and what they give, they give away other men's labours, not their own"

(Winstanley. The law of Freedom.)

There are many writings to show the kind of society the Diggers aimed to establish. Just one quotation will suffice.

"Shall we have lawyers?"

"There is no need for them, for there is to be no buying and selling; neither any need to expound laws; for the bare letter of the law shall be both judge and lawyer, trying every man's actions. And seeing we shall have successive Parliaments every year, there will be rules made for every action a man can do."

(Winstanley. The law of Freedom.)

Four of the Digger's foremost persecutors were Members of Parliament who had been expelled by Cromwell for their Royalist sympathies. But they were still secure in their land ownership and were back in Parliament. Cromwell and those he represented were showing that, as far as they were concerned, the revolution had gone far enough. They held political power and they were prepared to use it to suppress their erstwhile supporters more ruthlessly than they had suppressed their former class enemies. In fact, they were prepared to compromise and ally with their former enemies to subdue the aspirations of their extremist followers.

Winstanley expresses the situation well:

"While this kingly power reigned in one man called Charles, all sorts of people complained of oppression... Thereupon you that were the gentry, when you were assembled in Parliament, you called upon the poor common people to come and help you... That top bough is lopped off the tree of Tyranny, and the kingly power in that one particular is cast out. But alas, oppression is a great tree still, and keeps off the sun of freedom from the poor commons still.

(Winstanley. A New Year's Gift for the Parliament and Army.)

Winstanley, in his writings, as in the few writings of other Diggers, realises the need to propagate his ideas and to gain support for them from a majority of the people. But none of them challenged the political supremacy of the wealthy capitalists. Instead they appealed for a change of heart. The more wily of the capitalists recognised at the outset the need to capture and hold political power to ensure the domination of their class over society. With the political machine in their hands their opponents on all sides were powerless.

The capitalist class still recognises that, and clings

to political power tenaciously. It will continue to impose its will on society until the working class deprives it of that power and proceeds to remodel society in keeping with working class interests.

W. WATERS.

Recommended books for students:—

- M. Beer. A History of British Socialism. Part I Section 5.
C. Hill and E. Dell. The Good Old Cause. Part 12.
M. James. Materialist Interpretations. Essay in "The English Revolution," Edited by C. Hill.
H. Holorensaw. The Levellers and the English Revolution.
E. Dell. Gerrard Winstanley and the Diggers. Essay in "The Modern Quarterly," Spring 1949.
E. Bernstein. Cromwell and Communism.
Berens. The Digger Movement in the Days of the Commonwealth.

HUMAN NATURE AND SOCIALISM

5—We Learn from Social Scientists

PEOPLE who criticise or object to Socialism because they think that human nature makes it impossible, assume that the characteristics they ascribe to human nature are fixed and unalterable. However, the science of anthropology (the study of human beings as creatures of society) shows that most of the characteristics are cultural acquisitions and have not been present in all societies. The importance of this to the case for Socialism lies in the fact that what is acquired culturally must change as the culture changes, and that the behaviour we are accustomed to think of as "natural" under Capitalism can and will be something entirely different under Socialism.

It is a commonplace that man is a social animal, i.e., that it is in human nature to be social. But it is not true in the sense in which it is commonly understood, namely, that our social nature is due to a social "instinct." We were not born with our social nature; we acquired it. Likewise, we were not born with a certain sort of social nature, but developed it because of the sort of social environment into which we were born.

Each step man makes in his history alters his environment, each alteration in his environment changes that in which his fellow men and the oncoming generation live. The background of the child differs from that of the parent; in a changed social atmosphere men themselves react differently: they acquire new knowledge, new experience, new understanding. They value things anew. Human nature is itself transformed.

Nor should the inter-relationship of man and society be overlooked. Apart from his group, a man is a mere potentiality. He is developed in a milieu that fosters, modifies, or destroys his capacities. To explain the individual and discuss his psychology as something distinct from the society is a false dissection, by which

structures are isolated from one another artificially and their organic connection destroyed. Society in its full sense is never an entity separable from the individuals who compose it. No individual can arrive even at the threshold of his potentialities without a culture in which he participates. Conversely, no civilisation has in it any element which in the last analysis is not the contribution of individuals.

Socialised habits

The life-history of the individual is first and foremost an accommodation to the patterns and standards traditionally handed down in his community. From the moment of his birth the customs into which he is born shape his experience and behaviour. By the time he can talk he is the little creature of his culture, and by the time he is grown and able to take part in its activities, its habits tend to be his habits, its beliefs his beliefs, its impossibilities his impossibilities.

People interpret the inevitability, under Capitalism, of economic competition as proof that this is the prime motivation that human nature can rely upon. The behaviour of small children, as it is moulded in our civilisation and recorded as child psychology, is the way in which the young human animal is "bound to behave." It is the same with ethics or family organisation. It is the inevitability of each familiar motivation that is defended, with the attempt always to identify particular local ways of behaving with Behaviour, or certain socialised habits with Human Nature.

Let us take as an example the case of warfare. War is a phenomenon that may or may not be a feature of a certain culture. There are regions where organised resort to mutual slaughter never occurs between social groups. It may be impossible for a people to conceive of the possibility of a state of war. Rasmussen tells of the blankness with which the Eskimo met his exposi-

tion of the custom. Ruth Benedict tried to talk of warfare to the Mission Indians of California, but it was impossible. Their misunderstanding of warfare was abysmal. They did not have the basis in their own culture upon which the idea could exist, and their attempts to reason it out reduced World Wars to the level of alley brawls. We may conclude that if war is justified it is because people always try to justify their behaviour, and not because war will bear an objective examination of its merits.

Property

When we turn to the question of private property we can learn much from the reports of field workers who have lived in societies where communistic sentiments prevailed. When on the Banks Islands, W. H. R. Rivers worked out the history of a plot of land which was cleared about four generations ago. The greater part of the plot had been divided up between the children of the clearer, and had since been regarded as the individual property of their descendants, but part had been left for the common use of all the descendants of the original clearers. Rivers was told that disputes were frequent concerning the portions of the land which were owned individually, while there were never any quarrels concerning the part which had been left for the common use of all. Let this be a lesson to those who think that there will always be disputes over land and other wealth, and that if it were all commonly owned we should all grab as much as we could!

A comparison between the Melanesian and people in our own civilisation is enlightening. The Melanesian knows that were he to wander into the next tribe he must look out for himself. The next tribe are strangers and enemies. But he does not live among strangers as we do. He lives among friends. They have never sought to rob him, or cheat him, or slander him. If he is down, if he has bad luck, if he has nothing to eat, they will vie with one another in supplying him with food. They will make a point of going hungry themselves rather than he should. And they will not even make a virtue of it, and think how very noble they are and how grateful he should be.

There is little ground for the conflict of individual interests where there is little private property. Where all interests are in common, mutual assistance and goodwill are spontaneous sentiments. To assist others, to share with them and to protect them is as natural in "uncultured" societies as it is natural in individualistic communities to rob, to cheat, outwit and defraud.

Even today there are some remote parts of the world that illustrate in embryonic form the basic social relationships of Socialism. Hunza, a country of 26,000 people high up in the Himalayas, has no money, no police, no jails, no courts and no army. Without money there is no crime. It is not, let us hasten to add, an example of Socialism—there is a king, and it is a pre-property rather than a post-property society. But at least it shows that people can live without money and private ownership, and live quite happily and fully too. "We are fond of sport, life and laughter. We work hard—then when the harvest is in, it is there for everyone," *Daily Graphic*, 31/12/52. Engels' description of the Iroquois is in the same vein, and he writes of the admiration inspired in all white people who have come into contact with unspoiled Indians, by the personal

dignity, uprightness, strength of character and courage of these "barbarians."

Morality

If we study the history of human sexual relations we find that these have varied considerably with different types of culture. Sexual jealousy, a high esteem for chastity, sexual modesty, and the tendency to fall passionately in love with a single object (so-called "romantic love") are such common and distinctive characteristics of civilised man, that not only laymen but frequently psychologists and naturalists take them to be inherent in man and inseparably united to his character. Nevertheless, these emotions are foreign to many primitive peoples. They have arisen in the course of the evolution of civilisation, and have been built up slowly and gradually as secondary characteristics under the influence of definite social conditions.

The technical use of morality—as a thing pertaining to the sex relation only or especially—is the application of our standards of sex behaviour, and our form of the sex taboo, to judge the folkways of all people. But all that can properly be said is that a great range and variety of usages, ideas, standards, and ideals can be found which differ greatly from ours. "Immoral" never means anything but contrary to the customs of the time and place. There is no permanent or universal standard by which right and truth in regard to these matters can be established and different folkways compared and criticised.

It is now a moral principle that it is wrong to commit murder. But in early Judea to sacrifice the first born was not murder; in the 17th century "not to suffer a witch to live" was not murder; in the 20th century war is not murder. Abstract precepts are of very little significance in the ethical history of mankind; it is their concrete interpretation which has varied.

The ethical problem of selfishness v. social-mindedness (one that is so often brought into discussions about Socialism) is not in fact theoretical but practical. Its solution lies not in the construction of new ethical philosophies but in the creation of a new society. Every act which leads towards that new society is a contribution to solving the problem. When mankind has attained a state in which goods and services abound and exploitation has ceased, selfishness, having no longer anything important to do, will wither away.

S.R.P.

Some useful books to read:—

- "Human Nature in the Making," M. Schoen.
"Patterns of Culture," R. Benedict.
"The Making of Man," ed. V. F. Calverton.
"Sin and Sex," R. Briffault.
"Folkways," W. G. Sumner.
"The Making of Humanity," R. Briffault.
"Man against Myth," Barrows Dunham.
(Concluding Article: "The Socialist Future.")

What agonizing thoughts must sweep
The doubting Christian mind
When reason waking from her sleep
Immortal God to find
With drooping faith and frantic pain
Scans the wide universe in vain.

W. W. FORD.

THE NATURE OF WAR

("Must Man Wage War?" by F. A. Crew. Thrift Books No. 18.

C. A. Watts & Co., Ltd. 1952. Price 1/6.)

AFTER the news of the Atomic Bomb in 1945, scientists in general, and atomic physicists in particular, got rather hot under the collar because they had done the pioneering research work which led to that horror of horrors; now with the possibility of bacteriological warfare the biologists are searching their consciences. Professor Crew has much experience of both warfare and scientific research, as he served in the army in the first world war, was Director of Medical Research at the War Office in the second, has been in the Territorials for 36 years, and since 1928 he has been a university professor of biology. He uses this experience and the data which is available on recent wars to analyse many aspects of war in this book. He has done this because, in his own words, "I have come to wish to be a citizen of the world, not of the world as it is but as it could be" (preface). He divides his study into three chapters on the biological aspects of the causes, conduct and consequences of war.

The Cause of War

There are some people who suggest that warring is inherent in human beings, because we are born aggressive, and therefore there will always be wars. However the professor does not fall for that fairy tale, pointing out that,

"Aggressiveness may be inborn, but this attribute is expressed only when specific outside pressures are brought to bear upon the developing individual. He may be prepared to display aggressiveness, but there is no intrinsic need that he should ever be called upon to do so."—(Page 30.)

After examining the way people are brought up, and how aggression is fostered in this bitterly competitive world, he comes to the conclusion that,

"He can develop in a competitive world where men, wanting the same thing, fight for it; or he can find himself in a world in which all things are shared."—(Page 32.)

When such arguments are pointed out to some people they will reply that although that may be true of "us civilised people," there are other peoples, such as the Indians, for example, who are readily classified into warrior and non-warrior types, into those who by virtue of their genetic endowment come to display those attributes which distinguish the fighting man, and those who, because of a different genetic constitution, are inevitably timid and cowardly, and thus are unsuited for a military career. To such people, the professor, who is a specialist in genetics, the science of inheritance, replies simply,

"There is no evidence which proves beyond all doubt that one ethnic, political, or social group is, for purely genetic reasons, superior to another in respect of military attributes."—(Page 20.)

Having brushed away these mental cobwebs, he considers the structure of society, noting that in modern society,

"Certain groups exist which are in no way productive but live on the surplus created by the productive groups. The maintenance and reproduction of non-productive groups can only be achieved, therefore, by the maintenance

and extension of power, of their dominion over the productive groups."—(Page 15.)

He goes on to point out that war began in earnest with class society and is inherent in a class society, concluding that,

"Wars are no longer waged for material things required for subsistence; they arise out of the productive relationships of groups concerning the acquisition of surplus."—(Page 36.)

This is because the ruling class, which is unproductive and lives on the surplus produced by the large majority of society, has something to gain from victory or lose by defeat, but the vast majority, the working class, gain nothing from war but sorrow, loss, and mutilation. However without their willing participation wars could not occur. Why then do they allow themselves to be persuaded to support it?

Noting that in capitalist society there is much human unhappiness, for millions of people spend most of their lives performing tasks which are both dull and tedious, giving neither physical nor mental satisfaction, and so live lives that are drab and featureless, he concludes that,

"Wars are made possible because the lives of so many individuals in the modern State are so grey and so dull, so complicated, and so unsatisfying. . . . War promises that which the individual has sought in peace and failed to find. It fills a life which has been empty. It unifies a people. . . . in short, war remains possible because in peace there is so little to satisfy the creative urge of the mature and skilled and to enlist the energies of adventurous, restless youth."—(Pages 34-5.)

The Conduct of War

Chapter 2 starts with an analysis of the way people are prepared for war, and then goes on to a description of a number of aspects of modern war. For example, he points out that in wartime hospitals are emptied of the tuberculous so that those injured by bombing, or on active service, can have the beds, and that in the army the men are exposed to conditions that lower their general well being, so making them prone to diseases such as tuberculosis. The result is that during the war the number of people suffering from this disease increased tremendously.

As germ warfare has been in the news in recent years and much has been written of it, but little substantiated, the following comments by an expert biologist are of interest.

"That it is possible to manufacture weapons of great lethality out of existing biological knowledge is beyond all reasonable doubt; that such a weapon already exists is highly probable; . . . the biological bomb could be used in such a way that it would surpass the atomic bomb itself as a weapon of mass terror; it is cheap; it could be produced in complete secrecy, no vast plant tucked away in the remote desert being required for its manufacture.

"Certainly it is not beyond the ingenuity of man to produce such a weapon. It must presumably take the form of a package of exceptionally virulent pathogenic micro-organisms or of parasites of one kind or another which, being deliberately let loose in the enemy's country, initiates

an epidemic among the human population, its animals of economic importance, or its crops."—(Pages 65-6.)

Some Consequences of War

There are some people who think that war is beneficial to the human species because it is eugenically selective. They think that the "stronger" eliminate the "weaker," so the "fitter" or "better" only survive, and in this way humanity rids itself of inferior types. On the other hand there are others who suggest that in war it is the most worthy who are the first to be killed, so that it is the "better" who are killed and the inferior types that survive in most cases. They suggest that it is because war claims the "cream of the youth" that economic crises and other evils of capitalism occur, as those left cannot cope with the difficult problems that occur. The professor points out that neither view is sound. The first because tactics and weapons are far more important in war than any possible slight difference in biological make-up; the second because it has never been established that it is the "betters" who are killed off. With the mass attacks on civilian populations, which have become commonplace in recent times, such arguments are rapidly losing any appeal that they may have had in the past.

He discusses colonisation by conquest and points out that in the last thirty years of the nineteenth century, Britain France and Germany each gained by conquest millions of miles of territory, and so extended their domination over millions more people. However, in the twentieth century all the lands of primitive peoples have been colonised, so war is between nations of more or less equal technological development, who come into conflict over raw materials and markets. Since the Great Powers are highly industrialised they produce weapons of a new and more terrible type, and so war becomes more and more horrible.

What of the consequence for the working class? He says that more than 27 million people were killed, by war, between 1914 and 1918. Some of these on the battlefield, but many by the general lowering of resistance to disease that occurred through worry, anxiety, long hours of work, and lack of nourishing foods. For example, the influenza epidemic of 1918 was greatly aggravated by war conditions, and even after 1921 the mortality rates were considerably higher than would have been expected if the war had not occurred. Having mentioned the 8,000 T.B. patients discharged from sanatoria in the second world war, and its disastrous effects, he goes on to consider how war breaks up homes and so leads to an increase in crime, and considers the statistics on the lack of housing. Then, with a few well chosen examples, he shows that although the British working class got nothing but misery, disease, violence, and premature death, from war, the plight of the workers of the other countries of Europe was even worse. Such is the lot of the worker in capitalist society; he always gets the dirty end of the stick!

The Prevention of War

After this powerful indictment of war he considers that,

"The prescription for prevention is the complete transformation of the social inheritance and of the social structure, which by its very nature must periodically yield warring. . . . A unified world must be created in which in

peace the needs of the bodies, the intellects, and the emotions of all shall encounter the means of satisfaction."—(Pages 36-7.)

He concludes that,

"The only remaining obstacles to the achievement of this aim are those that reside in the minds of men."—(Page 38.)

He states that he will work actively to oppose war.

So far, so good, but how are we to go about this? Professor Crew gives no consideration to that very practical question. However, from the analysis we see that to prevent war, capitalism, the society of classes and therefore of wars, must be replaced by socialism, the society of human beings where war cannot exist. To do this it is necessary for the majority of the people of the world to understand capitalism and desire to introduce socialism. The change in human society will then be made by sending a majority of socialist delegates to the parliaments of the different countries with the mandate to make the required legislation, for parliament is not merely a "gas-house," but is the seat of power. Then the power will be transferred from the ruling class, the capitalists, to all mankind. Such is the nature and purpose of the socialist revolution. The Socialist Party is the instrument fashioned by members of the working class, to carry out this historic task.

Conclusion

The terminology used in this book has not the precision of the Marxist terms that the socialist is familiar with. Often the word State is used when country would be more accurate, nation is used when peoples are meant, and the capitalist, or ruling class, are often referred to as power groups. The author does not seem to be sure of his analysis of the state capitalisms of Russia and Yugoslavia. As to formulating organised action on the basis of this analysis of society the writer gives us no lead, and in the preface he even supports the present armament drive and the present warfare in Korea!

However, this text of 81 pages is a powerful indictment of war, and the capitalist society that breeds it. Therefore it should be on every socialist's bookshelf next to "The Socialist Party and War," for it treats certain aspects of war for which there was not room in that pamphlet. We are glad that priced at 1/6 it is within reach of all workers.

R.J.J.

SOCIALIST STANDARD SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Detach and forward, with remittance, to Literature Secretary, S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, London, S.W.4.

Please send SOCIALIST STANDARD for 12 months (6 months, 2/9) for which 5/6 is enclosed.

Name
(BLOCK LETTERS)

Address

.....
(State if renewal or new subscriber.)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

SEPTEMBER,



1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

THE STRIKES IN FRANCE

THE strike movement which began on 5th August among Post Office workers and quickly spread to transport, gas, electricity and many other state and private undertakings and involved at its height some three or four million workers was still in progress a fortnight later; though by that time some workers had returned to work because their strikes had been deliberately limited to one or two days, and others had been reported as drifting back. As a movement to demonstrate workers' solidarity and to bring pressure to bear on the government and the employers it was complete and highly efficient. As was remarked by one observer, the Paris correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, "rarely has any strike movement in France, planned and announced in advance, been so successful" (*Manchester Guardian*, 8/8/53).

The spark that set off the Post Office strike was a report that the Government's "emergency" economy measures included reductions of Post Office staff and extending the age of retirement on pension. It was later denied that the Government had ever intended to make the later retirement compulsory but a possible explanation is that they were preparing the way and only the unanimous demonstration of resistance by the strikers made them repudiate it. The reason why the

strike was enthusiastically joined by millions of other workers demanding higher wages was that the workers in general were finding their low standard of living being further reduced by rising prices. Mr. Douglas Jay, in the *Daily Herald* (13/8/53) estimated that "the average wage-earner in France today if he is single, gets a wage not much above two-thirds of what the British wage-earner gets." It is only through the higher rate of family allowances in France that the worker, if he has a wife and three children, has an income about equal to that of workers in Britain. Mr. Jay also pointed out that under French rent acts rents are exceedingly low—he goes so far as to claim that "the British worker's family on the average spends eight times as much on rent as the French."

But he went on to say:—

"However, these cheap rents—which the new decrees are to raise—are not much consolation to the French worker. It is partly just because food prices are so high that he has little to spare for anything else." (Italics, Mr. Jay's).

Although Mr. Jay draws attention to these facts he fails to see how hollow they make the social reforms of the "Welfare State" which he and the French Labour leaders so blindly support. Unless the workers use their only industrial weapon, the strike, to fight for higher wages, low rents and social insurance benefits merely operate to enable employers to pay a low money wage. This is further borne out by Nora Beloff, writing from Paris to the "Observer" (16th August, 1953) on the condition of French workers.

"An official publication has revealed that they enjoy an even smaller proportion of the national revenue today than before the war: the substantial rise in social benefits has been more than offset by the severe drop in real wages. The Civil Service is proportionately worse off than are employees of private business."

So much for the alleged benefits of the "Welfare State" and of being employed by the Government.

The strikes themselves have had some very interesting features. It has been customary in Western Europe, including Great Britain, for Governments and some trade union officials to see in every strike the hand of the Communists; but the French Postal strike was started not by the Communist Union but by the anti-communist French Post Office Workers' Union belonging to the "Labour Force" trade union federation. They took the initiative first in the Post Office and then in other industries, and the Communist Trade Union Federation (C.G.T.) and the Christian Trade Union Federation later joined in. It happens that the "Labour Force" Union is stronger than the Communist and Christian Unions among Post Office workers, though the C.G.T. claims in all 2,000,000 members as against about 800,000 in the "Labour Force" Federation and the same number in the Christian Federation. As the *Times* remarked (7/8/53) "No Communist interference seems to have been needed to start the trouble."

But though the excuse of Communist "plotting" could not be used this did not prevent the French Government from threatening to use all measures to smash the strikes, including the movement of tanks into Paris (*News Chronicle* 18/8/53).

The French Prime Minister when he ordered the movement of tanks might have recalled the outcry three

months ago when Russian tanks in Eastern Germany were used to overawe German strikers; but the Western Governments' reaction then was very different. They approved the strike and made horrified protests about the tanks, and with their approval the American Government has been distributing millions of food parcels to the hungry East German workers. But this time it is the French tanks not Russian, and there has been no offer by Western Governments of food parcels for the hungry French workers. The *Daily Worker* (11/8/53) seized on this and denounced British and other unions in the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions for their decision to give money to help the East German workers while not doing the same for the workers of France and Italy. But the Communists are actually taking up a still worse attitude. Some British unions have agreed to give financial help to the French workers, while the Communists, instead of helping the strikers against the Communist Government of Eastern Germany pretend that they were not strikes but "American-inspired riots."

The real tragedy of the trade union movement in France and in the world generally is that most trade unionists allow themselves to be diverted from single minded concentration on working class unity because of their attachment to nationalism and to support of one or other forms of Government of Capitalism. Except for a brief spell after the first world war and again after the second world war the international trade

union movement, which before 1914 was a single organisation paying at least lip-service to international working-class unity, has been divided into bitterly hostile camps, the W.F.T.U. supporting Russian State Capitalism, and the I.C.F.T.U. supporting Western capitalism; not to mention the Christian and Independent groups maintaining isolation.

One hopeful aspect of the strikes in France was the way in which workers in the three rival groups (Labour Force, Communist and Christian) came out on strike together, temporarily forgetting their rivalries. This, and the fact that the strikes in Eastern Germany have demonstrated the workers' defiance of the Communist dictatorship there may give reason to hope for some future movement towards world working class unity.

In the meantime the divisions in the French trade union movement endangered the strikes. It is of great importance, especially in a more or less general strike, that there should be common action not only to come out on strike but to go back as a united body. It is equally important that such strikes should not be allowed to drag on until, under pressure of starvation, workers begin to drift back one by one. This danger was heightened in France by the efforts of some of the leaders of the three main groups to outmanoeuvre and discredit each other in the conduct of the strike and by the parallel tactics of the Government and the employers to play one off against the other.

THE DOGS DO BARK

LOWLY but surely the match sellers, street singers, hawkers and blind fiddlers are coming back. Not as many as in the past, because there is still no mass unemployment; the writer, raised in East London in the years after 1918, remembers beggars in every main street. Undisguised begging is, of course, legally prohibited (nevertheless, it is still done in every big city in the world); the mendicant has to have something to play or something to sell, or, as an extra indignity if he can afford neither, he must sing for his succour. The war, which provided jobs even for the unfit, and its aftermath, which gave gratuities to the soldiers and pickings to the spivs, took away the beggars. Now there aren't the jobs and there isn't the money, and the beggars are re-appearing.

Begging today is a series of unenviable one-man businesses, lacking organization or enterprise. It was not always so. The heyday of beggars was in the reign of Elizabeth the First. They went in gangs, hordes and regiments, often highly organized, with their specialists and their hierarchies. Some unknown rhymester of the sixteenth century coined a jingle which went:

"Hark! Hark! The dogs do bark—
The beggars are coming to town."

It was no children's song then, but a piece of grim news.

The numbers of sixteenth and seventeenth century beggars are astonishing. In London there were twelve thousand among a population of less than two hundred thousand in 1600. Holinshed recorded that

"... there is not one year, commonly, wherein three hundred or four hundred of them are not devoured and eaten up by the gallows in one place and other. Henry the Eighth, executing his laws very severely against such idle persons... did hang up threescore and twelve thousand of them, in his time."

It was the same all over Europe. Huberman claims that a quarter of the people in Paris in the 1630's were beggars. The Low Countries swarmed with them. In sixteenth-century Switzerland, according to Renard and Weulersse:

"... when there was no other means of getting rid of the beggars who besieged their houses or wandered in bands about the roads and forests, the wealthy even organized hunting parties against these wretched homeless ones."

And in Spain, books like "Lazarillo de Tormes" and Quevedo's "Great Rogue" described in minute detail the organizations of beggars.

Where did they all come from? Many were peasants, driven from their land by enclosure and rack-renting. In the fifteenth century they had pulled down enclosures, started fires, risen in impotent protest; now they became beggars. Others were soldiers, returned penniless but with a taste for plunder from the continental wars, or set adrift from the disbanded feudal armies. The dissolution of the monasteries added former servants and retainers—"abbey-lubbers," they were nicknamed—to the ragged hordes; and took away, too, the principal source of charity to vagrants. Then there

were chapmen, strolling players, gipsies, ballad-mongers, scholars—Gamaliel Ratsey and Luke Hutton, the Elizabethan highwaymen, were University men—and ever so many more. There was no work to be had, and no charity; the new owners of the land had no tradition of generosity to the poor. It was beg, steal or starve.

By the 1570's there were huge guilds and fraternities of vagabonds; he who joined had to undergo initiation and serve an apprenticeship. The vagabonds, like the law, saw no difference between vagrancy and crime. They had their own dialect, called Pedlars' French or the Canting Tongue, a mixture of Elizabethan English with the varied contributions of soldiers, foreign beggars and vagrant monks; some of its words—cant, foist, booze, crank—are still with us.

The head of a beggars' fraternity was known as the Upright Man—certainly not uprighteous, for he usually had more than one mistress, and they were called Morts or Doxies. Plain beggars were Rufflers; then there were the Clapperdogens, who blistered their flesh with arsenic and herbs to gain pity. The Counterfeit Cranks ate soap to feign fits and the Abraham Men pretended to be mad, while Dummerers folded their tongues in their mouths to be thought dumb. If a beggar got his bread by telling tales of misfortune, he was a Freshwater Mariner. Among the petty thieves, there was the Hooker or Angler, who carried an iron-hooked staff and "fished" to good purpose with it; the Foist, who picked pockets; and the Nip, who slit purses when their owners looked the other way—"a knight of the knife," Ben Jonson called him. Most common of all in London was the Coney-catcher, or confidence trickster—the forefather of the spiv. There were Upright Women, too: Mary Frith, known as Moll Cutpurse, was the head of a gang which for years terrorized the Shooter's Hill area.

The administrators of Elizabethan England tried hard to solve the problem. In 1571, a census of beggars and rogues was attempted; the following year, the famous edict was published by which "lusty and valiant beggars" were to be

"... grevously whipped, and burnte through the gristle of the right Eare with a hot Yron of the compasse of an ynche about."

This seems to have offered little discouragement, and in 1598 further measures were introduced, including the instruction:

"Every vagabond found begging is to be stripped naked from the middle upwards, and openly whipped, until his or her body be bloody."

At the second offence, a beggar became a felon, and was liable to be hanged.

Whipping, branding and hanging gave no solution. In 1601, alarmed by bad harvests and what Thorold Rogers describes as "a growing disaffection," Elizabeth's last Parliament passed the Poor Law Act which, in general principles, remained unchanged until 1834. It made relief of the poor the task of each parish, to be paid for by compulsory Poor Rates. Did it solve the problem? Well, three years later, James the First was condemning vagrants to be branded with a large "R" on the left shoulder and, on a second offence, summarily transported to Virginia.

Some people had their own ideas of a solution.

Edward Hext, a west-country Justice of the Peace, thought the beggars were merely lazy:

"Work they will not, neither can they, without extreme pains, by reason their sinews are so benumbed and stiff through idleness, as their limbs being put to any hard labour will grief them beyond measure."

Others said that drinking and gambling caused all the trouble; still more people put it down to the growth of London, which doubled its population between 1558 and 1600. Parliament tried to check the metropolitan spread as unsuccessfully as it tried to combat the beggars.

It was the growth of capitalism that did it. In the sixteenth century the merchants were securing the accumulations which were the starting point of industrial capitalism; and at the same time the other necessity, the class of free labourers, was coming into being. Broken away from their former security of subsistence, the beggars were part of the nascent working class, coming face to face with poverty and the freedom to starve. Gradually, as urban life developed, the vagabond fraternities fell away; in their place came organized crime and disordered medicancy. The poor were to be always with us.

In eighteenth-century Scotland there was the same problem. Fletcher of Saltoun estimated—probably too lavishly—that there were two hundred thousand "sorners," or sturdy beggars: a sixth of the population. Some, called "gaberlunzies," were licensed by the Kirk Sessions to beg from door to door, in country districts they were the carriers of news and the repositories of folk-lore.

And so it went on. More Acts of Parliament (usually passed in emergency or as the result of panic); the stocks, prison and transportation for the beggars. Defoe, who had reported the lives of the indigent in "Moll Flanders," asked for work-houses in "Giving Alms No Charity"; eighteen years later, in 1722, they were set up. The nineteenth-century Poor Law Act made the workhouses places of terror. Not surprisingly, people did their best to keep out of them. The legislators tried hard to stamp out begging. Vagrancy Acts were passed in 1824, 1838 and 1873, and in 1904 a committee was set up by the Local Government Board to enquire into the whole thing.

Legally, the following activities are banned. Begging in public, or causing a child to beg; having no home or visible means of subsistence, or being unable to give a good account of oneself; telling fortunes; exposing wounds to get alms; peddling without a licence; failing to maintain one's family. The Vagrancy Acts brought into being the street singers, the unmusical musicians and the rest.

Consider, then, the beggar. Brought into being by capitalism as the "free" labourer, without work or hope; scourged, branded, killed, hunted and ridiculed—tramping and mumping his way through four centuries, sometimes violent, sometimes obsequious, the symbol of the dispossessed. He was an angry peasant in 1553, a ruffler in 1603, a fugitive from the workhouse in 1853, a legless ex-soldier with a barrel-organ in 1923, and is a kerbside singer in 1953. Consider, too, the failure of brutes and humanitarians alike to do away with him... and then consider the world that could be.

R. COSTER.

PASSING SHOW

Our way of life

MR. BLUNDELL, leader of the European elected members of the Kenya legislature, has been devoting deep thought to the cause of the Mau Mau trouble. He has reached his conclusion: the disturbances stem from the fact that one section of the people in Kenya is trying to impose its rule on all the rest. Does this mean that Mr. Blundell is now an opponent of the rule of a small white upper class over all the original inhabitants of the country? Not a bit of it. This is what Mr. Blundell had to say:

The problem is one we have had since 1916. Since we brought British administration to this country, for more than fifty per cent. of that time we have had reluctance by the Kikuyu to accept the benefits of law and order and our way of life, with the prosperity which can stem from it, except on their own terms. This is a challenge by the Kikuyu people—whether actively or passively sustained—to impose their rule on all the other people in this country. (*Times*, 25/7/53).

This accusation by a member of a ruling class which has recently come into Kenya and stolen the best land there, that some of the original inhabitants are trying to do what Mr. Blundell and his class have already done themselves, would be merely funny if its implications were not so serious. In fact the speech, by showing the attitude of mind of the whites in Kenya, goes far towards explaining the outbreak of violence on the part of the Kikuyu.

Reservation of amenities

While Mr. Blundell upholds the cause of white supremacy in Kenya, Dr. Malan upholds it in South Africa. The latter's policy of apartheid, when presented by a skilled exponent, can be made to sound almost harmless. All it means, it is said, is that the white people and the black people of South Africa are to keep themselves to themselves, and are to develop along their own lines in their own areas. No superiority is implied of one race over another, it is alleged. But recently some courts in South Africa have been taking this kind of propaganda at its face value, and have been refusing to convict Negroes of offences against the apartheid laws unless it was shown that amenities of equal comfort have been reserved for them in railway stations, trains, post offices, etc. Dr. Malan has now given his answer. His Minister of Justice (sic) has introduced a Bill which rules that "reservation of amenities for a particular race or class of people cannot be invalidated merely because no similar amenities have been reserved for any other race or class" (*The Times*, 4-8-53). This reveals the apartheid policy for what it is. The South African ruling class has the same feeling towards the working class it oppresses and exploits as any other ruling class has: it fears them, because they are in a numerical majority. But this fear has been developed to a higher pitch in South Africa because the workers there have a different racial origin, and a different colour of skin; and because, for historical reasons, the workers of South Africa have not yet achieved the level of education and the standard of living which the workers of Western Europe and America have gained. The desire of the South African ruling class to keep the workers in subjection, and to maintain inviolate the present class-structure of South

African society, bears fruit in the racial superiority theories, and the apartheid policy, of Dr. Malan.

Public ownership à la Morgan Phillips

In those industries which were taken over by the Labour Governments from 1945 to 1951, some changes were made, but the basic capitalist structure was preserved intact. Since the 1951 defeat and the loss of ground at subsequent bye-elections, the Labour Party have had to face the fact that the workers, having experienced what the Labour Party called "Socialism"—that is, nationalisation—are for the present less prepared to support them at the polls in sufficient numbers to return them to power. So they have been casting round for new ideas. And their new proposals show that they contemplate making even fewer changes in industries they take over in future. Instead of making (for example) the mining machinery and machine tools industries wholly state-capitalist, Morgan Phillips proposes that a future Labour Government should merely acquire a fifty-one per cent. shareholding in certain key firms within these industries (in an article in the August issue of the Labour Party magazine, "Fact"). Mr. Phillips continues to use the term "public ownership" to describe the projected organisation of such industries, but at least he is now more chary of calling such plans "Socialist." And so he should be; the Labour Party is more and more revealing itself as merely another capitalist party.

The work-insiders

Incidentally, what of all those people who have told us in the past that they disagreed with us, but that they were going to join the Labour Party in order to "work from within," and change it into a Socialist party? They are clearly failing to do this, as could have been forecasted (and was). There is only one party for Socialists, and that is the Socialist Party.

A.W.E.

OBITUARY

Many members of Ealing Branch will already have heard with sorrow of the sudden death of Comrade "Dick" Cotton. He died on 31st July of a brain haemorrhage, at the tragically early age of 32. Although we all knew that his health was poor, requiring him to make frequent visits to hospital and to undergo several operations, it is clear only now, when all is over, how serious his illness really was. The fact that he himself never complained of his afflictions no doubt contributed to this.

Dick Cotton was not a "prominent" member of the Party. He was not a speaker or writer. Outside the Branch his name is probably hardly known. He was one of those comrades, however, without whose enthusiasm, labour, and support—consistently given—the Party would soon cease to exist. By his death the Party has lost a keen and active worker for Socialism, and we in Ealing Branch have lost a staunch comrade and a good friend.

We extend our deepest sympathy to his mother and family in their sad loss.

S.H.

STRIKE-SMASHING IN NEW ZEALAND

FROM New Zealand comes a book that will boil the blood of every class-conscious worker. Even workers who have not yet recognised their class status will feel their gorge rise when they read in this book of the trickery, the double dealing, the brutality and the callous bludgeoning of their fellows.

"151 Days" by Dick Scott is the official history of the great waterfront lockout and the supporting strikes in New Zealand from February 15th to July 15th, 1951. The book is published by the now deregistered New Zealand Waterside Workers' Union and has been made possible by the advance orders of hundreds of trade unionists.

If there is any man in doubt about the role of a capitalist government in a major industrial dispute—let him read this book. If there is any man who doubts which way a Labour Party will line up in a major industrial dispute—this is the book for him. If there is any man who thinks that the days of brutal treatment of workers are past—he also must read this history. If there is any man who needs evidence of the class struggle—here it is, right up-to-date. If any man can read this book without his emotions being stirred—then he is lacking in elementary human feeling.

As in Britain, living costs in New Zealand have risen sharply during the past few years and workers' wages have lagged a long way behind. Also, as in Britain, many New Zealand workers had to work long hours in order to get overtime pay and a pay packet that would give them and their families a decent living. The waterside workers applied for a pay increase and received an award from an arbitration court. But the ship owners tricked them and refused to pay the full amount of the award, so the watersiders said they would work no more overtime till they got their due pay increase. The ship owners were after a show-down. The waterside workers' Union was too truculent; it must be brought to heel and its members rendered docile. When the waterside workers showed up for work on Wednesday, February 15th, the Port Employers confronted them with an alternative to either work overtime or get the sack. They said "no overtime"—and were locked out.

Within a few days the Government stepped in with a set of emergency regulations that made the British Trades Disputes Act and the American Taft-Hartley laws look like Sunday School picnics. The government declared a state of emergency because it claimed that the watersiders, by refusing to unload ships, were depriving a large proportion of the people of New Zealand of the necessities of life, despite the fact that the men were at the dock gates every day offering to work a forty hour week.

When the harsh regulations were imposed, miners, seamen and others came out on strike. From then on the government, employers, top-layer trade union officials, press, police, pulpit and every job-mongering, back-crawling lickspittle turned his attention and spite towards breaking the solidarity of the workers effort and getting them back to work on the employers terms.

We haven't space to detail all the events and legal crimes of those six months. The book sets them out with documentary evidence and ample illustrations. We

will give just one sample.

Amongst those who suffered most were the miners in the small inland mining towns. On a bleak plateau, seventy miles by a rough bush road from the nearest coastal town, was the tiny mining community of Ohura.

"500 people... a hard working peaceful community where tar-sealing the main street and building a new social hall were more urgent matters than 'Wrecking,' 'intimidation' or 'violence' and where the policeman's house stood empty and no one felt insecure." Page 83.

When the 100 or so miners in this town heard the truth of the situation after receiving misleading telegrams from their Union national headquarters, they downed tools. Then the police moved in.

At their first meeting the police entered, took the names of all present and ordered them to their homes. Local Union officers were placed under house arrest. Police broke their way into private houses where miners were meeting together and ordered them to their respective homes. One man was arrested and charged for talking to some miners who were working. Members of a miners' committee travelled a dangerous 55 miles across the bush to meet in another town, only to have the police again close their meeting. The police blocked the roads to prevent miners or other strikers from entering Ohura and chased suspects in squad cars. Groups of men on the streets were broken up and ordered to their homes.

Despite this isolation and police rule the Ohura miners held out. They could collect no relief, their womenfolk could not go out to work, their savings vanished, their possessions were sold, debts mounted, the hardships of winter were great, but after over four months they remained solid. When the strike was over and the Ohura miners received a grant of £59 10s. from the Australian miners' £6,700 New Zealand relief fund, they voted unanimously to give it to the Auckland watersiders.

You should read this history of the workers of New Zealand where.

"Government was reduced to a thing of helmets and uniforms, cells and batons, where the highest civic duty could be measured in terms of a willingness to arrest one's parents for a crime against private property." Page 129.

We in Britain who, apart from letters from our Socialist comrades in Wellington, have only had the press accounts of the happenings of those 151 days, thank and congratulate Mr. Scott and all others concerned, for this detailed and stirring history.

W. WATERS.

NEW PAMPHLET . . .

"QUESTIONS OF THE DAY"

An extensively revised edition of

"QUESTIONS OF THE DAY"

with several new chapters is now on sale. 123 Pages.

Price 1/-

(Post-free 1/2d.)

WHAT IS RELIGION?—(continued)

Belief in God

Of the five fundamentals of religion, belief in God is certainly the most important, because if there be no God, then miracles can't happen, there being nobody to make them happen. After-life could not be considered, and prayer would be a waste of time, for there would be nobody to pray to. Inspired books would not exist for nobody could write them. Clearly then, if there be no God the whole fabric of religion falls to the ground.

All the arguments for God yet launched fall into five categories.

1. The Aristotelean argument of First Cause.
2. The Universality of belief in God.
3. The Teleological or design in Nature.
4. The Moral or Ethical Argument.
5. Arguments built on the gaps in science.

Those who affirm God on the grounds that there must be a beginning to the Universe, to Life and to Man, argue that there must be or has been a prime mover who started it all, and who set the wheels of the universe working.

Of course there either was or was not a beginning. If there was a beginning then there was a beginning of everything including God. But those who hold this First Cause idea find it difficult to theorise or postulate the beginning of God. God they argue always existed, which contradicts their own argument. If one thing never had a beginning, and upon this everything else rests, then the whole argument is put out of joint. Materialists have consistently claimed that matter always existed and always will exist, because you can neither make nor destroy matter, so we have no problem to explain how something that always existed came into existence. Therefore we can dispense with God in the first cause idea.

The Universality argument postulates God on the supposed universality of belief in his existence. This appeared true in the Middle Ages when man's knowledge of the world was limited and there were vast tracts of unexplored territory. When Australia was first discovered, it was found that the aborigines had no ideas about God or gods, and the same with the Tasmanian aborigines (now extinct). Then the first contacts with the Eskimos revealed that they had no God or gods. In other parts of the world where primitive people had lived in comparative isolation and not been contaminated by missionaries, many of them remained agnostic.

The teleological or design in nature argument is still very popular. Those who champion it find God in the marvels of nature, the human eye, the beauty of the rose, etc. They never find God in the tape-worm with its tiny hooks so that it can hook itself into the lining of the human intestine and so prevent one's food from washing it through the system. The tape-worm also has glands along its body which secrete a strong alkaline fluid which neutralises the gastric juice, and so prevents it from being digested or killed. Did God think out all these marvellous things, so that his masterpiece—man—could have harmful parasites sucking his very life blood from within? Those who find God in the healthy child never find God in the child born

blind, deaf, dumb or an imbecile; and yet if he made the one he made the other. Whoever made health, made disease, the diphtheria bacillus, the cancer tumour and the plague, etc. The planless nature of the universe puts the teleological argument right out of bounds.

Those who find God in the moral and ethical issues proclaim that because people on the whole strive to do good and to live a just life, that there must be a God regulating their conscience. But what happens when people do wrong or act against God? As Mark Twain observed the Devil rules about three-quarters of the world and has a much larger following than any God ever had. As Socialists we know that moral and ethical problems are largely the result of economic conditions. A Bishop faced with no alternative but to starve or to steal some food, would choose the latter. Most people have little more choice than this in what they do, and are far more influenced by economic factors than they appear to realise. All moral and ethical questions are conditioned by or even changed by their social environment, and the ideas of one country or epoch are frequently the opposite to those of another.

Lastly the gaps in science. Why the rainbow, the tides, the rising and setting of the sun and the phases of the moon? To-day we know the answer to all these phenomena but primitive man didn't know, and many don't know to-day because of their absence of elementary knowledge of science. Such questions got people guessing and they found their answer in "God made them," or "God does it," or "God controls it," all of which mean that the whole thing is beyond their comprehension.

To-day we know full well that the rainbow has nothing to do with God once having flooded the world and put the sign in the sky to show that he was sorry for having done such a wicked thing. The rainbow is purely a physical phenomenon not needing the help of a supernatural to explain it.

There are a lot of things about Nature which we do not know, but there is no need to postulate God because of our ignorance. To primitive man storms at sea and pestilence were signs that the gods were angry with him, but as mankind's knowledge has improved, God has disappeared from the cosmos. With the growth of intelligence God has retreated. God, who could reveal himself at any moment, has now to be searched for.

We have examined the arguments for the existence of God and found that none of them will hold water, and must therefore conclude in the absence of being able to prove a negative, that no God or gods exist. There is perhaps a little difference between what has come to be the critical atheist's argument against God, as outlined above and what could be called the materialist's approach. The latter is content with the fact (or rests on the basis) that one can neither make nor destroy matter, so therefore has no need to look into the pros or cons about God, but lets him sleep undisturbed except for the enquiries of the secularists, freethinkers, rationalists and the like.

(To be continued)

H. JARVIS.

BETTING AND THE CLERGY

THAT pious organization, the Churches' Committee on Gambling, has been getting quite hot under the famous collar, to judge by their annual meeting in London.

It appears that an enterprising firm dealing in football coupons had the audacity to send some of them to the Secretary of the above-mentioned organization, the Reverend J. Clark Gibson. He says: "They have been sent to me at my home quite unsolicited and unwanted. What would happen if I were bumped off one night and the police came in and these coupons were found in my home, I do not know." (*Daily Telegraph*, 27.3.53). Of course the reverend gentleman would not know, seeing that he would be as dead as mutton.

Other speakers complained of football pool coupons being sent to them. To illustrate that pool betting is a game of chance and not a matter of skill, the Reverend Clark Gibson brought to the Committee's notice a device similar to a child's puzzle, with a glass front and fourteen horizontal divisions. In each division is a ball, and the top of the gadget is marked with 1, 2 and x. It is shaken and the coupon is filled in according to where the balls settle. All this, mark you, to prove that this sort of gambling is a game of chance!

Dr. Ellison had this to say: "The danger the country is faced with is the setting up of an industry of gambling. If the gambling habit were allowed to establish itself further it would bring moral collapse." Dr. Ellison should know that the gambling habit has been established for years. Presumably a "flutter" on the horses would be classed as gambling—in which case the gentleman in question should reprimand the British Monarchy, who are not above attending race meetings

and, being human, may indulge in speculation. And then there are the gamblers on the Stock Exchange—but, of course, that is entirely different!

Another contributor to this jolly little gathering was Lord Ammon, former Labour M.P. and Member of the Government, who said: "Wages were never higher and we have full employment, yet never was so much being spent on betting and drink. These things indicate a rapid decline in moral standards." Full employment is a somewhat elastic term. Lord Ammon as one-time member of the National Dock Labour Board will know the uncertainty of employment for dockers under "full employment."

It is significant that not one of these guardians of our morals speaks of war being a danger to morals. Their voices are silent on the vilest form of gambling, juggling with human life for the capture of world markets and trade routes. They are more concerned with letters being thrust through their doors. A group of people sets up rules and calls them morals, and an inert mass obeys them.

Social life is largely governed by do's and don'ts. Our rulers and preachers would wish the people to obey these edicts to the letter. That some of them don't is an ever-increasing anxiety to our rulers. How can society remain stable when there are such rebellious transgressors? It really is too bad, think the clergy. For their very existence is at stake. They must assert themselves at every opportunity, and the Churches' Committee on Gambling knows this.

When it comes to raising people's living standards, religion is usually silent. Practical work was never done by priests—they come in at the death.

J. CROWE.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

A last-minute reminder to members and sympathisers that our Autumn Delegate meeting is being held at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, on Saturday and Sunday, September 5th and 6th, commencing each morning at 11 a.m. A Dance will be held in the Conway Hall on Saturday evening and the usual propaganda meeting will be held there on the Sunday evening commencing at 7 p.m. London and Provincial speakers will address the meeting.

"Questions of the Day" in a revised and enlarged edition is now available in restricted quantities. Further deliveries are expected soon. Obtainable from branches or the Literature Committee at Head Office, price 1s. per copy or 1s. 2d. post free.

The Party held another of its week-end schools at "Treetops" Holiday Camp in June. This year the attendance was not large, probably on account of the

weather. Several comrades who notified their intentions of attending, altered their minds at the last moment, making organisation very difficult. However, despite these drawbacks, it was a happy gathering. Comrade Willmott led a discussion on Anti-Duhring and Comrade Turner opened up on Trade Unions.

P.H.

DELEGATE MEETING SOCIAL AND DANCE

at
CONWAY HALL
RED LION SQUARE, W.C.1.
on

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5th, 1953, 7.30—11 p.m.

Tickets **2/-**

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire. Sec. c/o 29, Lincoln Ave., Belfast, N. Ireland.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The **SOCIALIST STANDARD**, **WESTERN SOCIALIST** and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

Reading

Will members and sympathisers interested in forming a group in this district please write to J. A. O'Brien, 31, Frensham Green, Shinfield Rise, Reading.

Transport Workers

Will Party members employed by the L.T.E., interested in co-operating to extend Socialist propaganda amongst transport workers, please get in touch with Frank P. Dunne, 17, St. Mary's Grove, Canonbury, N.1.

LEWISHAM LECTURES

at Co-op. Hall, Room 1, Rushey Green,
Fortnightly on Mondays at 8 p.m.

5th Oct. "Literature and the M.C. of H."—R. Coster.
19th Oct. "Certain Critics of Marx"—E. Willmott.

ISLINGTON BRANCH LECTURE

"The Role of the State,"

Speaker: Michael.

On Thursday, 24th September, at 8 p.m.

Co-op. Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7.

DEBATE WITH YOUNG LIBERALS

"That the Policy of the S.P.G.B. is Compatible
with the Best Interests of the Human Race."

At the **RED CROSS HALL**,
153, SHIRLEY ROAD, ADDISCOMBE,
CROYDON, SURREY.

On Tuesday, 8th September,

commencing 8.5 p.m.

Liberals represented by:

ROY DOUGLAS and A. J. S. ADDISON.

S.P.G.B. Speaker: A. TURNER.

I.L.P. Chairman.

The following busses stop nearby the Hall: Nos. 54, 119,
130, 194 & 194a.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN SEPTEMBER

Wednesdays: Goslett Yard, (off Charing Cross Road),
8.30 p.m.

Wednesdays: Gloucester Road (adjacent to Station),
7.30 p.m.

Thursdays: Notting Hill Gate, 8 p.m.

Fridays: Earls Court (opposite Station), 7.30 p.m.
Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.
White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11 a.m.
East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.
Clapham Common, 2.30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Exmouth Market.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

CROYDON BRANCH

The following lectures will be given at 8 p.m. at
RUSKIN HOUSE, Wellesley Rd., Croydon (near W.
Croydon Stn.), on **Wednesdays**—

Sept. 2nd "An Open Forum on Trade Unions."

Sept. 23rd "The Industrial Revolution"—V. Phillips.

Oct. 7th "The Declaration of Principles"—

R. McLaughlin.

You and your friends are cordially invited.

NOTICE TO CENTRAL BRANCH MEMBERS

The Central Branch Secretary will be at the Delegate meeting on Saturday and Sunday, September 5th and 6th. He is arranging to be available during the Sunday morning to meet Central Branch members, so please make a note of this and contact him.

READ ALSO—

THE

WESTERN SOCIALIST

The Journal of Scientific Socialism in the Western Hemisphere. Published jointly by the W.S.P. of the United States and the Socialist Party of Canada.

Per Issue 6d. (Post free 7½d.)

Postal Subscription Rate:

6 issues 3/9; 12 issues 7/6

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Blackfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 9th and 23rd September, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5185.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmer's Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Secs 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murtion Gower, Swansea.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8.10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road School, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hallard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.15.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. "Franelle," Rawreth (5 mins. by Southend bus via Shotgate). Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (3rd and 17th September) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighon. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., E. M. P. Hirst, c/o H.O., 52 Clapham High Street.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 55, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Aikenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 14th and 28th September, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to A. Ivimey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to P. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. P. Hart, 54, Ashdale House, N.4.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec., 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. 9 Vicarage Rd, Kingston (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushley Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 8th and 22nd September, Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate; Sec. J. M. Breakey 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 590 Vol. 49 Oct., 1953

Much Ado About Monogamy— The Kinsey Report

WELSH NATIONALISM

THE CRISIS IN THE LABOUR MOVEMENT

SCIENTISTS, SATELLITES AND SOCIALISM

WHAT IS RELIGION?

THE EASTERN SCENE

SLINGS AND ARROWS

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

WHO HAS NOT HEARD of Dr. Kinsey? The question brings to mind one of those Bateman cartoons in which the unfortunate ignoramus or faux-passant trembles before a collection of gazes incredulous, horrified, contemptuous and pitying. Of course, *everyone* has heard of Dr. Kinsey. He is the Indiana professor who has heard 5,940 true confessions; the man with a load of light, the saviour of the Sunday press in a wet summer.

"Sexual Behaviour in the Human Female" has not yet been published in Britain, but the papers have run riot over its American publication, taking attitudes of unctuous righteousness or playing the thing for all it is worth in order, as Dr. Comfort would say, to startle the Citizens. Either way, the Kinsey Report has had more publicity than any other book in a generation. Kinsey himself is said to be making nothing financially from it; the profits will go to the Research Committee with which he is concerned. Some commentators have given this as exclusive evidence to free Kinsey from the charge of "cashing-in on sex." It is not so certain. The first American printing has been a quarter of a million copies—a figure to make the best-selling novelists envious and to suggest that the sponsors are well aware of the market value of their work. Whoever the beneficiaries may be, the Report obviously is providing—and was meant to provide—an outsize jackpot prize.

Enough has been related, quoted and discussed (mostly under huge, spicy headlines) to make some evaluation of Kinsey's findings possible. The information in the Report relates principally to the incidence of departures from the orthodox monogamous pattern. Dr. Marie Stopes is, of course, quite right when she says: "All the different types of sex behaviour and abnormality were fully described, with numerous long detailed cases, by Dr. Havelock Ellis in his six-volumed work forty years ago." That is not Kinsey's point; the aim of his Report is to establish, on a statistical basis, what are the sexual behaviour-patterns of women in present-day society. The information was gathered from thousands of interviews with members of women's societies who volunteered, and the statistics take in 5,940 case-histories. The danger of drawing conclusions from sample investigations is obvious, but it must be said that their technique has been highly developed in America, where sample polls are taken about anything and everything. In this case, however, there are factors which cast additional doubts on the value of the sample.

The greater number of the women interviewed were of better-than-average education and income. Presumably, therefore, they could express

themselves more fluently and were more likely to have come in contact with the possibilities of sexual variation than most working-class women. And they were volunteers—in other words, they were willing to recount their sexual experience. One does not have to agree with the *Sunday Express* that such volunteers must be “a collection of oddities and exhibitionists” to make reservations about them. It is clear enough that the women with respectable histories of chaste courtship and faithful marriage are the least likely to offer their reminiscences. They wouldn't have much to tell, for one thing.

Kinsey's 5,940 cannot be considered as a cross-section or anything like one, and certainly not as a basis for conclusions about the “human female.” But if that were not so, the major issues would be unaffected. What makes such a survey necessary and gives it so compelling an interest? The Kinsey Report is an attempt to establish the communality of habits and attitudes which in urban society are “private,” i.e., highly individualized. In healthier, less complex social groups the pattern of sexual behaviour is part of the general social pattern. The accounts by Malinowski and Margaret Mead of sexual life among the Melanesians and Polynesians are not based on card-indexed interviews with anonymous “guinea-pigs,” but describe the observed behaviour-patterns of communities. In Kinsey's world (which is our world) sexual life is observed by peeping into bedrooms. That is why so many people are so avidly interested in the Kinsey Report; it offers a peephole and gives a basis for comparison, which is the foundation of approval (or otherwise). And it is probably true that the Report will help sexual unorthodoxy to spread, or “make immorality rife,” as they say. The assurance that “everybody's doing it” is usually enough encouragement for the others.

The monogamous family system has always needed the support of complex legal and moral codes. Kinsey's most shocking “revelation” is that a great many people do not adhere to those. He says that America's sex laws are “unrealistic, unenforceable and incapable of providing the protection needed.” He finds—if it needed finding—that for a lot of women the white wedding dress is only conventional and not representative of the true state of affairs. He hears that American wives do not always fall in with the requirements of the Hays Office. Plenty of other investigators have confirmed that chastity and fidelity are not prized as they used to be. (It is doubtful, though, if they were ever prized as much as that. One is reminded of the classic conversation between villagers: “Old George bain't the man 'e used to be.”—“No, and never was.”)

The truth is that morally and legally compulsive monogamy has never really worked. It would be rather surprising if it had, considering its demands; for example, that a woman can discipline herself to be restrained and chaste before marriage and automatically become yielding and responsive after it. Whether or not monogamy is natural is beside the point, which is that the property-based (and therefore compulsive) monogamy of our society imposes conditions which have never been fully accepted and are less and less accepted to-day. Nevertheless, the property basis is there, and almost the whole vocabulary and imagery of sex and marriage carries the property implication. Outside medical text-books, a man never enters a sex relationship with a woman: he “takes her” or “possesses her,”

she “becomes his” or “gives herself” to him. (If anyone doubts, by the way, that society still regards women as inferior chattels, listen to “Housewives' Choice” in the mornings, the announcers address their audience in the tone which most of us would use to speak to an imbecile child.)

Kinsey claims, in effect, to find that the principle of exclusive possessiveness does not always apply in modern sexual behaviour, and that is what has made his book “shocking.” He advances several propositions to account for what he finds, but—as reported, at any rate—they all are deduced from assumed physiological and psychological incompatibilities between men and women: for example, his claim that their highest sexual capacities occur at irreconcilably different stages in adult life. Women, he says, do not reach their sexual zenith until the thirties and then retain it until quite late in life; men attain it in adolescence and thereafter decline (though most sexologists have recorded noteworthy cases of good tunes on old fiddles). Kinsey appears not to take into account, however, the influences of industrial and urban environment. Britain's Royal Commission on Population suggested in 1949 that these have a considerable effect on sexual function:—

“It is indeed arguable that modern urban life—whether because of the greater worry and nervous strain it brings with it, or merely because of the greatly increased number of alternative outlets for free time and energy—tends to cause a reduction in sexual activity from the level associated with the predominantly rural life of earlier times. There have, in fact, been investigations which showed a lower frequency of intercourse among men engaged in urban than among those in rural occupations.”

A satisfactory sexual life is not a case of merely making the most of maximum desire; more than anything, it is dependent on privacy, understanding, and freedom from tiredness and worry.

There remains the question of why departures from the orthodox monogamous pattern have become more and more frequent in the past thirty years or so; the family is breaking up, say the bishops—and so it is. The life of a family in this country seldom exceeds two generations, and its members tend to break away as soon as they reach maturity. The stability of the family was part of pre-industrial, pre-urban society, in which each group was bound by tenure or dependence to its land or its small community. To-day, in the teeming agglomeration of town life, there is no chain of secure subsistence, and the experience of one generation has little significance for the next. The economic ties which gave the family its durability and coherence have largely gone; in consequence, there has been a sharp change in the traditional attitude to sexual morality.

Probably the strongest, and the most relevant to Kinsey's theme, of the broken moral traditions was that sex was something for men to enjoy and women to endure. The endurance was real enough and related to the consequences rather than to the sex act itself, and the developed techniques of birth control have been the decisive factor in doing away with this astonishingly unwholesome attitude; they have also made extra-marital sex possible for women. Society has never really thought it half so bad—a joke for seaside postcards, in fact—for men to have sexual adventures, chiefly because men don't have babies. Now women needn't have babies either, and that fact alone has pro-

vided a good deal of Dr. Kinsey's material.

To sum up, then. The Kinsey Report may be an accurate analysis and it may be hokum; this writer is disposed to think that it was prepared with an eye on its market potentialities and that its statistics are misleading. It has nothing new to tell, except possibly—and this cannot be substantiated—that the incidence of sexual misbehaviour in the human female is higher than was suspected. The general propositions (many of which were made in Kinsey's earlier work on the human male) about sex are based on assumptions of physical and mental make-up, and leave out of consideration the

effects of environment on capacities and inclinations.

Nevertheless, the publication of—and the necessity for—a study which claims to find a high incidence of frailty in the female flesh points to the current instability of the property-based monogamous marriage system. The family as it is traditionally imagined is disintegrating in capitalism, and the morality which upheld it is relaxing consequently. Some people are shocked by Kinsey's findings because they think women ought to be men's property; others, because they fear that imperfect people will make an imperfect world. Never fear; the world got like it first. R. COSTER.

WHAT IS RELIGION?—(continued)

Causes of Belief in God

THE causes of belief in God or gods are usually to be found in fear and ignorance or a combination of both. It is quite easy to imagine how primitive man feared all the things he could not understand; natural phenomena as exemplified in volcanoes, earthquakes, storms at sea, forest fires, pestilence, plagues and disease. None of these things could he understand or explain with his limited knowledge.

The phenomenon of death was always a puzzle to mankind, especially was this the case when one lost friends with whom one had hunted, fished, talked to, etc., and when, without apparent warning, all this happy association ceased. The once animated body, pulsating with life and energy, suddenly became lifeless, cold and still. It was just as impossible for them to explain this strange affair as it is for a young child to understand that people die. Added to this came dreams in which primitive man found himself again in the company with those who had died and whom he had buried. What was the explanation of this strange happening? Little did early man realise that he had been dreaming; the same with a young child who awakes after a nightmare. He knew or believed that he had been fighting wild animals, or enemies, and with those of his companions he had recently buried. When after such a dream he awoke—what could he possibly conclude? The idea of another self which did things on some occasions was probably one of the earliest ideas of a soul, and in this case it wasn't schizophrenia. While he was alive, i.e., awake and conscious, he knew he was alive, and yet in some unexplainable way he came into contact with those he knew or thought were dead and buried.

It is well known that indigestion causes nightmares, especially that variety of indigestion that follows feasting that all primitive races indulged in between the periods of famine and semi-starvation. When a large animal was captured for food it had to be eaten while “the going was good,” for it would not keep long, and the next meal might be a few days off.

The habit of burying the dead is thought to have taken origin not from hygiene, but for the purpose of preventing the spirit of the dead from haunting the living. Hence they drove thick sticks or stakes into these bodies to hold them down (so that they wouldn't roam at night), and piled heaps of heavy stones on them, again for the same purpose. The latter was the fore-runner and origin of the tombstone and the coffin.

When priests arrived on the scene at a later stage, they were not slow to capitalise these fears and dreams

of early man, although they in their turn could no more explain them than could the rest.

The first gods (corpse worship) were made as effigies of the dead, especially the dead chiefs and leaders of the tribe, and the best warriors. The gods of the black races were black, with short black curly hair like those who made them. Where the races had long hair and painted skins, so, too, were the gods made. The gods of the Chinese were yellow-skinned and with slit-like eyes of their makers. Truly did man create his gods in his own image.

With the making of the gods the god business grew up with the priests as leaders, skilled in tribal magic. It was only necessary for them to possess a little knowledge above the average, or to pretend to possess it. No doubt the only knowledge some of the first priests had was that they knew that there was by bluff prestige and power to be obtained from the god business. Savages and primitive man were very credulous, seldom doubting, hence credulity became a vice, not a virtue, for religion to take root in. Believing without evidence or against evidence is the negation of thinking and logic. No wonder Marx wrote that “the criticism of religion is the beginning of all criticism.”

H. JARVIS.

DEBATE

with

Crusade for World Government

at

HACKNEY TOWN HALL,

MARE STREET, E.8.

(Nearest Tube Station, Bethnal Green)

Monday, 2nd November at 7.30 p.m.

“Should Socialists Support World Government?”

S.P.G.B. — E. WILLMOTT

WORLD GOVERNMENT — Name to be supplied

SCIENTISTS, SATELLITES AND SOCIALISM

THERE have been several letters to the press recently complaining about the lack of enthusiasm shown by scientists in finding an effective means of fog-prevention. It has been suggested that those scientists who are at present investigating ways and means of exploring the moon should turn their attention to preventing fog.

This is a little unfair to the scientists. The majority of those engaged upon astronomical research are better suited to the exploration of outer-space than to the more mundane problem of clearing the smoke-laden atmosphere of London.

Quite apart from this the problem is not so complicated as it may seem. Cities such as New York have dealt with it quite simply by forbidding the burning of smoke-producing fuels. The boffin is not required to produce an involved formula for this. In any case, the decision as to whether preference should be given to fog-prevention or inter-planetary travel depends not upon consideration for the welfare of the community, but rather upon which is likely to be the more valuable from the military or commercial point of view.

If a scientist is fortunate he pursues a line of research which is of interest to him, but usually he is directed to follow a line dictated by the interests of capitalism.

We have reached a stage in the evolution of human society where we are on the threshold of journeys into outer-space. It is not a new idea. As long ago as the seventeenth century Cyrano de Bergerac was "dreaming of journeys to the moon with rockets. Now that space travel seems to be almost within our grasp and the idea gaining greater public appreciation, other considerations are troubling the more thoughtful scientists.

There are, unfortunately, too many workers who are overawed by the views of the professors. They are thought to be men whose mental powers are far greater than those of the rest of us. A conception which many scientists take pains to foster.

As a justification for the amount of time and money devoted to astronautics the scientists, many of whom are quite sincere, suggest that artificial satellites revolving around the earth at regular intervals could be used as observation platforms from which it would be possible to see whether any nation were preparing for an atomic attack and, if so, to prevent it.

To a Socialist, no utterance could be more naive than this, nor less scientific. It takes us back to the old argument that every nation should sink its differences and, in order to ensure that no one violated the treaty, an international police force be organised.

If the working class is waiting for someone to hand them security on a plate they should discount the back-room boys.

An astronaut, Oscar Schachter, writing in the Journal of the British Interplanetary Society for January, 1952, introduced some opinions which were both pathetic and laughable. He was concerned about the violation of sovereign rights by artificial asteroids. In other words, he projected the problems of capitalism with its nautical three-mile limit into outer-space, where he could foresee legal difficulties arising from the passage every few hours of a satellite over someone else's territory.

If workers incline to the same views as this scientist let them remember the League of Nations and its modern counterpart, the United Nations. Every day the United Nations become more disunited and doomed, like their predecessors, to end in complete impotence.

One of the greatest mathematicians of the age, Albert Einstein, revealed his complete lack of political understanding a few years ago in a book entitled "The World As I See it" (Watts). In this he put forward the view that wars originate from ideological conflicts and that all nations should come to an understanding and agree not to fight. International control is the solution, according to Einstein.

Such schemes as this are foredoomed to failure and show as little fundamental knowledge as the child who thinks that the earth is flat.

Those who support these Utopian schemes are ignorant of the fact that war is a logical outcome of the capitalist system. So long as wealth is produced to be sold in the world market, wars will ensue, regardless of pacts and declarations of friendship.

If travel to the moon and elsewhere becomes an established fact before the end of capitalism, the workers of the world will only be killed in greater quantities in the scramble for new sources of raw materials.

If we conquer space after the establishment of Socialism we will not be troubled by frontiers and boundaries and extra-territorial rights. Furthermore, life on earth will be so much more enjoyable that the people in America who have already reserved their seats in the first space-ship to the moon will probably cancel their reservations.

It is the workers of the world, the scientists included, who must solve the problems of production and distribution, but they must have the necessary knowledge.

To help them achieve their ends there exists the Socialist Party of Great Britain and its companion parties abroad.

Study our case and join with us in order that we may create a world in which all effort is for the common good.

CHESTER.

PUBLIC MEETING

ST. PANCRAS TOWN HALL

on

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4th, at 7.30 p.m.,

Subject :-

'The Socialist Challenge to the Labour Party'

Speakers :-

A. TURNER -- E. WILMOT

ADMISSION FREE

THE EASTERN SCENE

India: Sacred Jobs

Recent demonstrations in Lucknow by over 1,000 Uttar Pradesh primary school teachers, over wage demands and the non-payment of salaries (some being months in arrears), brought forth a peroration from the Chief Minister, Mr. Gobind Ballabh Pant on the sacredness of teaching. According to *Janata* (organ of the Praja Socialist Party, Bombay, 1/3/53) he is reported to have advised the teachers "to follow the ideals set up by the Gurus of ancient India and to take their jobs as sacred work for the progress of the country." Mr. Pant stressed that it was the importance of their task that made the teachers the most important section of the nation. It is, therefore, he said, not dignified for those who had a sacred task to perform, to think of petty things. We can be sure that Miss Horsburgh will take note of this, for the next Burnham report on Teachers' pay.

Despite Mr. Pant's exhortations to the teachers, there has been no cessation of their activities. On the other hand, we haven't noticed that Mr. Pant has taken any of his own advice.

As most teaching is done by inculcation, perhaps the Minister thinks that the old maxim is true, "That empty vessels make most noise."

* * * * *

India: A Reckless Report

A report on India's prison administration was recently submitted to the United Nations by Dr. Walter Reckless, an American criminologist on loan to U.N. (*Janata*, 1st March). Dr. Reckless thinks that the Indian prison system is in a parlous condition and needs reorganising drastically—too many Black holes and not all in Calcutta. The treatment of prisoners seems to be wholly punitive, with all of which our eminent criminologist disagrees. Not that he wants to abolish prisons, he just wants to make them better to live in! He wants to substitute corrective and rehabilitative training for the present punitive system, the idea (as if we didn't know) being, that with training prisoners will face life anew, full of confidence, and that their bitterness against society will disappear. In other words, they won't steal any more property.

The amazing thing is that the report recognises that environment plays a part in the make up of a criminal, but contains no talk of changing the environment, only the prisoner. Many of the convicts in India's gaols are there because they could not subsist outside without stealing.

There was no mention of that other class of criminals; the 10 per cent. who live on the plunder which they steal legally from the workers. But then who expected there would be!

* * * * *

Labourism in India

Mr. B. S. Mahador Singh, Chairman of the State Praja Socialist Party, a body roughly analogous to the British Labour Party, has been voicing criticisms of the Indian Congress Party Government which he and his followers helped to establish.

Speaking at the Fourth Annual Conference of the State Mazdoor Sangh early this year he said:—

"Any legislation that imposes restrictions on the right of the workers to strike, regardless of providing other avenues of settlement, will be strongly resisted by the Hyderabad State Mazdoor Sangh, for in the opinion of the Sangh the right to strike should be assured to all workers." (*Janata*, 1/3/53.)

At the moment of writing the P.S.P. has only 22 seats in the National Assembly, which still does not bring them anywhere near the Communist Party's total of 41 members and position as chief opposition party. Still the P.S.P. leaders have hopes of getting into power and, like Social Democrats throughout the world, are prepared to tell workers almost any tale (witness the above) in their endeavour to achieve this.

One thing they don't tell workers, is that capitalism can only run in the interests of the capitalists and that all Governments put down strikes. Witness the Labour Party in this country, which engaged in strike-breaking when in office, although telling another story when out. We can be sure that if the P.S.P. ever achieves power they will do likewise and that Mr. Singh will forget the hot words he poured forth at Hyderabad.

* * * * *

National Bank of Egypt

We are often exhorted by various newspapers and political leaders in general not to scuttle from Egypt. The information below may give one of the reasons why our rulers are so keen to stay there.

The recently published report of the National Bank of Egypt, shows that a gross profit of £E2,317,817 was made for the year ending December, 1952. A dividend of 20 per cent., the same as the year before, was paid to the shareholders. The capital of this Bank is mainly British. (*Manchester Guardian* 10.4.53, Company report.)

* * * * *

Israel. Soviet Jews

Mr. Ben-Gurion, Israel's Premier, is reported as saying at a meeting of immigrants on April 5th, "That he hoped that the Soviet Government would now allow Jews in Russia to emigrate to Palestine and resume diplomatic relations with Israel."

If this news manages to percolate through the Iron Curtain, the two and a half million Jews should not take it too seriously, for even if Malenkov and Co. were willing, it must be remembered that legislation was passed last year in Israel which limits immigration to certain categories. 80 per cent. of the immigrants must be under 35 years. The other 20 per cent., the over-35's, must have trades or professions, or sufficient resources to arrange for their own accommodation. All immigrants must pass a medical examination, supervised by Israeli physicians (*Manchester Guardian*, 3.12.51).

This of course will exclude a large part of the Jews in Russia, and those who are eligible, are liable to think twice about giving up home and job to go to Israel where unemployment is rife. The above legislation makes a mockery of the hoary clichés which are still trotted forth by Ben Gurion and his supporters, such as the "Ingathering of the Exiles."

Many of those who are in the "National Home" are thinking twice about it. Up to December, 1952,

39,000 are reported to have left the country, and 25,000 people inside Israel have preferred to keep the nationality of the country they came from (*Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, 12.12.52), which speaks for itself.

The S.P.G.B. has pointed out since its inception that Nationalist movements or for that matter any reformist organisation cannot solve the workers' problems; only the ending of capitalism and establishment of Socialism can do that. Ben Gurion (who called himself a Socialist and refers to his Mapai Party likewise) is not interested in Socialism. He wants emigrants from Russia, or anywhere else for that matter, to help build up capitalism in Israel. Technicians, teachers, doctors, scientists and maybe a few Rouble millionaires will be more than welcome. But if aged over 35, sick, unskilled, or without financial backing, the signboard says "No vacancies." Which is capitalism all the world over.

Israel Jewish Unemployment

Unemployment as we all know, is one of the many horrible aspects of capitalism and has increased

in many countries since Malenkov made his peace statement. Israel is no exception and has one of the highest (if not the highest) percentages of unemployed in the world. Out of a population of 1,629,000 there are twenty-five thousand registered as unemployed (*Jewish Observer and Middle East Review*, 12th December, 1952). This does not include part-time workers and those who would not register anyway; such as most of the Arab population which forms the largest part of the 179,000 non-Jews.

Working on the assumption that the average family in Israel has at least four members, it can be seen that a very large section of the population is affected.

The supreme irony of the situation, lies in the fact that many of these people dissipated their energies over the years in the Zionist movement and other "Jewish" Nationalist organisations in the endeavour to form a "National Home," only to find that they can suffer just as much in Israel as elsewhere. For Israeli capitalists are no different from the rest of their class and are quite impartial about exploiting either Jewish or Gentile workers.

J.K.

HUMAN NATURE AND SOCIALISM

6—The Socialist Future

THE object of the socialist movement is not "political" in the sense of advocating one type of government rather than another. It is nothing short of an entirely new social set-up and, to a large extent, it means an entirely new type of human nature. This is not to say, as non-socialists are so fond of putting it, that it needs an entirely new race of human beings to make it work. It simply means that people living in the new society will be shaped by a socialist environment instead of, as today, by a capitalist one.

In what ways will people living under conditions of production solely for use be different from people today? This is a question that has appealed to the imagination and reasoning powers of men ever since the idea of Socialism first arose. The answers have been many and varied; some (in particular, the various utopian visions) have become outdated by the very developments of Capitalism itself, and others will doubtless take shape as the ideas of Socialism become fruitful and multiply.

What should be our concern is not so much to work out a detailed picture of the future—a castle in the air—but to construct from the materials at hand a solid socialist edifice. For example, we do not know enough about future material developments within Capitalism to foretell how people will travel under Socialism. On the other hand, we do know that, given conditions of common ownership, the phenomena which are exclusive to private ownership (buying, selling, stealing, etc.) will no longer exist. The people who now engage in these activities will use their energies in more socially useful and constructive ways.

Indications from the Present

Our method of discovering what the future can and will bring must be to ask ourselves what we know of

the present, its relationship to the past, and what we may call the directional lines to the future. What do most people want from their lives today? What are they seeking and yet failing to find? What do they desire to be rid of, and yet lack the knowledge of how to do it?

The answers to these questions will largely determine the sort of world which can be created when men at last start to make truly human history. Let us first consider what is basic to all societies—work, or productive activity. Marx has suggested that work will become, not merely the means to live, but itself a prime necessity of life.

Capitalism has so reduced the status of the worker, taken all the joy from his work and separated him from its fruits, that he has come to regard it as an evil necessity. Socialism will restore dignity to all human labour, remove its price tag, and make it fit the needs of human beings instead of those of machines or markets. People will work because they know it is necessary to the sustenance of themselves and society, and because they *desire to work*—or, in the case of those activities which in themselves are not pleasurable, because they desire the end product.

We can gain some indication of the attitude to work that will prevail under Socialism from the way in which people regard certain of their activities today. A man may work far harder on his allotment to produce vegetables directly for his limited community (family) than he does on the job at which he works only for money and which he probably cordially detests. When you suggest to him that he likes work, he hotly denies it. But when you ask him whether he likes working on his allotment, he replies: "That's different. That's my hobby."

It is significant, as Professor Nunn has pointed out in "Education: Its Data and First Principles," that where spontaneity prevails, work and play become one and indistinguishable. When the socialist says that work in the new society will become as hobbies are today, he is not suggesting that people will adopt *exactly* the same attitude to all work as they do now to their hobbies. He knows that the influence of Capitalism extends beyond the hours of employment, and corrodes even the simplest pleasures and the most personal relationships.

Social Relationships

Yet a different facet of human nature is revealed in the behaviour of people under adverse conditions. Solidarity with those whom you recognise as being "in the same boat" as yourself, tireless and selfless work on behalf of a stricken community such as during the East coast floods earlier this year—all indicate the human potential, and even craving, for co-operative endeavour. This will attain fulfillment in a society in which there are no drawbacks to helping others, and no penalties for dropping the attitudes of self-defensive mistrust which a highly competitive system forces us to adopt.

Social relationships will change from those of mutually antagonistic owner and non-owner, buyer and seller, employer and employee, to those where such antagonisms will no longer exist. Instead of coming into conflict with those Capitalism makes your enemies, and even having to be "on guard" against your friends, all human relationships will be conducted in an atmosphere of social harmony, where the separate individuals who make up the social whole will be working with each other and not divided against themselves.

Under all forms of society one of the basic human desires is to seek and obtain acceptance from one's fellows. Today this has become narrowly interpreted as seeking and obtaining acceptance from one's boss, who is, in turn, supposed to be acceptable to someone or some institution higher up—the Monarchy, Church or God, perhaps. To question any of the "accepted" attitudes to these things is—well, it is not always easy and not always a sound policy if you seek success in the capitalist sense of the term.

With Socialism, however, social acceptance will not rest upon standards dictated from above. The absence of economic rivalries will mean the absence of social rivalries. "Keeping up with the Joneses" will give way to working and generally behaving in ways which help other people instead of seeking to get the better of them. From being atomised into millions of separate families, the world will become one vast human family. The marriage institution, based on the needs of property, will be replaced by associations based on the needs of human beings, and they will promote a wider love of humanity instead of seeking a refuge from its present vast impersonality.

Different Outlook

The absence of private property will have far-reaching effects upon all human activities and relationships. It is easy to see that many of the employments so necessary to Capitalism will have no place in a socialist society—armed forces, police, lawyers, gaolers, insurance and advertising agents, bank workers and many others. Another aspect not so often considered is the different outlook that people will have. Today,

when someone whom we do not know makes a friendly advance or an unsolicited offer of help, we tend to look askance at him and ask ourselves: "Ah, what's he up to?" Not that the caution is altogether unjustified, because in present society we are encouraged to regard those outside our own small circle as "fair game" and legitimate objects for passing on the kicks we receive from the hostile world. But with Socialism all this will be gone—the world will be a friendly place, because it will not cost anything to be indiscriminate in bestowing affection.

When goods and services are no longer commodities to be bought and sold and haggled over, it will bring different attitudes to these things or, rather, it will then enable the existing attitudes to be freed from considerations of profit-seeking. After all, even today the relationship between buyer and seller is not completely reduced to the cash nexus and dominated by satisfaction of self—there is usually a residue of concern that the other fellow is satisfied with the transaction. Socialism will enable this concern to be present in all human intercourse, and will free it from the calculations which now cramp the expression of generous feelings.

All manifestations of the insecurity that cannot be escaped in property society will become things of the past. It will no more occur to people to store up freely available goods in excess of their current needs than today to fill every available receptacle with water "because it is free." No longer will people be worried, often to the point of mental illness, about what tomorrow will bring forth—whether they will lose their job, fail to find somewhere to live, go hungry, badly clothed or unwanted. They will be secure in the knowledge that the welfare of all, as society's aim, will not be something talked about by politicians, but naturally acted upon by the whole people, who will have no inducement to do otherwise.

Since this is the concluding article in the series, it may be useful briefly to survey the ground we have covered. We started by discussing some of the misuses of the term "human nature," explaining that it is his environment which makes man a creature of one society rather than of another. The myth that "you can't change human nature" was exploded, and the role of the Socialist as an agent in the making of history was outlined. Then, in the fourth article, we saw some of the patterns of behaviour which Capitalism generates, and how it does so. The writings of social scientists (mostly non-socialists) were quoted to show how human nature varies under different social conditions, and how men acquire it through those conditions. Finally, we have been concerned with explaining the object of the S.P.G.B. by giving some indication of the socialist future.

Our aim, throughout all these articles, and indeed in all our propaganda, is to convince all people that Socialism is both desirable and practicable. If you still believe it is not desirable, we are ready to take some of the blame—perhaps we have not explained it sufficiently clearly, and you can help to put that right by questioning our case. If, however, you believe that Socialism is desirable but not practicable, then we can only suggest that you do yourself a favour and join with us to make it practicable.

S.R.P.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD



OCTOBER,

1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

FIFTY YEARS AFTER

The Crisis in the Labour Movement

JUST fifty years ago, in 1903, the workers who, in the following year, were to found the S.P.G.B., were weighing up the claims of those who argued that the sure road to emancipation had already been found by the Trades Union Congress and its political offspring, the Labour Party (then known as the Labour Representation Committee). Their view—and a most convincing one it seemed to most workers who had begun to think about the matter—was that the separate unions would conduct the struggle for improved wages and working conditions, the T.U.C. would formulate general claims for protective legislation and, along with the Labour Party, would work towards independent working class representation in Parliament. They were able to combine activities at home with the belief that war could be abolished through the international trade union and Labour movement, and their ultimate aim of a reconstruction of society had already been formulated in a resolution passed by the T.U.C. in 1903, which supported "the principle of collective ownership and control of all the means of production and distribution." That such a resolution was passed at that time was due more to the zeal of a politically active minority than to any conviction on the part of the rank and file, but

the minority hoped and believed that in time acceptance of this ultimate aim would become general. They were soon congratulating themselves on their success in popularising the demand for "Socialism" when they succeeded in getting more and more workers to become enthusiastic about the prospect of a Labour Government which would introduce, along with numerous social reforms, the general nationalisation of industry.

Against this flowing tide the warning of the S.P.G.B. that the reform of capitalism, Labour administration of capitalism and the extension of State capitalism would solve no working class problem, had little chance of being heard. The S.P.G.B.'s insistence on the paramount need to build up a Socialist movement, having as its sole aim the replacement of world capitalism by a Socialist system of society was fated to be dismissed as a well-intentioned but impractical policy that would soon be forgotten as the trade union-Labour movement triumphantly advanced.

Now, at the recent Trades Union Congress and at the Conference of the Labour Party, the rights and wrongs of that controversy of fifty years ago come to mind once more. But with what a difference after this passage of time!

On a superficial view, and if the opponents of the S.P.G.B. had been correct, the T.U.C. and Labour Party should be celebrating their final victory and the inauguration of the new society they had vaguely dreamed about but never seriously examined. Their membership has grown enormously; they have achieved social reforms in great number and of a magnitude they could hardly have hoped for at the beginning; they have had years of Labour Government and have seen the transfer of large industries to State ownership. Yet, instead of self-congratulation and confident progress to new victories they find their movement split into warring factions. While one group presses for more nationalisation with the kind of arguments they used 30 or 40 years ago the majority of their political and trade union leaders warn the rank and file that such a policy has now become unrealistic and unrelated to the real needs of the present situation. The lengthy report of the T.U.C. General Council that was endorsed by the Congress urged a "go-slow" policy on nationalisation on the grounds, among others, that the hasty and ill-considered extension of nationalisation, particularly to manufacturing industries, would show a failure to appreciate the financial and trading needs of this country and would not be in the interest of the workers.

From the standpoint of those who tacitly accept the position of making the best of British capitalism in a capitalist world this is, of course, a powerful argument and it was not surprising that the Report received the approval of the capitalist Press. But this brings us back to the point we were at fifty years ago, when the S.P.G.B. foretold that the T.U.C.-Labour Party policy meant just that and could mean nothing more.

This is indeed where we came in. Half a century of further experience of capitalism, with its poverty, unemployment and wars powerfully reinforces the case consistently advocated by the Socialist opponents of reformism and State capitalism. Workers seeking their emancipation and the inauguration of a Socialist system of society should now more easily appreciate how unanswerable was and is the case of the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

SLINGS AND ARROWS

Famine, Death and Poverty

Has a millionaire ever died of starvation? Among all the thousands of corpses cleared from the streets and villages of India during the great famines was there one of an emaciated capitalist?

It is commonly held that when famine occurs in any part of the world all the inhabitants of that region suffer from its effects. Its causes are attributed to everything from floods to drought, from bad agricultural systems to the vengeance of God upon man's wickedness. That this vengeance is wreaked always and only upon the poor would appear to be unjust, unless, of course, poverty is a crime and its victims are also its perpetrators. But the rich do not suffer the pangs of hunger during famine. While tens of thousands of Indian workers and peasants were dying in the streets of hunger; while Government transport was sent round to pick up the corpses to prevent the outbreak of disease, food speculators in Bombay and Calcutta, like obscene blow-flies, waxed fat on the profits they made out of the deaths of their fellow-countrymen.

The poor do not get fat. When there are surpluses of food it is because of poverty and not because there is too much. The *Observer*, in its issue (6/9/53), writing a leading article, entitled "Food," says:—

"... if the efforts to raise living standards in the underdeveloped countries make headway, food surpluses will disappear: they exist because of poverty, not because everyone has enough to eat."

The latest report of the Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations estimates the proportion of the world population subject to malnutrition to be 59 per cent., an increase of 50 per cent. on the pre-war figure. This, in spite of the fact that there have been exceptional harvests, even in India, the classic home of famine.

Further evidence of this comes from the *Daily Express* (26/8/53), whose reporter, Mr. James Leasor, writes: "For the first time in as long as anyone can remember, India has no food problem." If we were to conclude from this that all would be fed and all hunger satisfied, we would be hopelessly wrong. Mr. Leasor means that there is no failure of crops, although from the concluding remarks of his article he seems to be aware of the basic problem, that of poverty.

We could tell him

Mr. Leasor makes some very interesting revelations. He reports having met the Indian Food Minister, "a worried man... two years ago at the time of the Bihar famine" on his tour of the country telling people that he has so much wheat "we don't know what to do with it." Unfortunate Food Minister to have his worries over too little replaced by worries over too much. There is a simple solution to his problem, he could give the surplus away to those who need it, but, of course, so easy a way out would not occur to a Food Minister. And there are countless numbers who need it. Mr. Leasor concludes his article with the following:—

"It is a strange, sad irony that while for the first time India has a food surplus, probably just as many people will

be as hungry as ever. Food is there in plenty, but the money to buy it is not. Unemployment and the cost of living are still rising. And what satisfaction do full warehouses give if your stomach is empty?"

Giving away the surplus would alleviate the temporary needs of the people, but it would not solve the problem. Charity is no substitute for Socialism. But this solution which would wipe out these anomalies and sufferings is not likely to commend itself to politicians and other apologists for a system which condemns millions to death for the sake of a ledger entry, a piece of appropriately printed paper or suitable embossed disc of metal.

"A dog's life"

In the same issue of the *Daily Express*, in an adjoining column to Mr. Leasor's article, and under the above heading, appears the following item. Comment would be superfluous:—

"In a Soho restaurant yesterday a woman put a plate of chicken down on the floor for her pekinese."

"A peke's nose is naturally well turned-up. This peke managed to turn his up a bit further. The manager looked on, shrugged his shoulders, and commented: 'No salt, no pepper, no mustard, no wonder'."

Weep for the Suffering Rich

Landlords are always complaining that they are losing money, yet none of them offer to change places with their tenants. Store magnates are always muttering about "overheads," yet none of them will give up their "troubles" to lead the life of a mere worker. Nevertheless, the rich do have their troubles of which the poor have no conception and for which they have little sympathy. For example, which worker after buying a yacht, painted sapphire blue, has to spend two years seeking for a pair of sapphire earrings to match, as an American millionairess had to do? Which docker, for instance, has had the bother of suing the Casino at Monte Carlo because he has been barred from there? Not a single one, we dare to suggest.

As if this were not enough trouble we now learn from a Dr. Reuben Kahn (*News Chronicle*, 12/9/53) that the rich are more prone to disease than the poor. In a series of experiments carried out by the doctor he has discovered that in poor countries people have more "natural antibodies—resistance—in the blood." He refuses to speculate on the implications, but "some bacteriologists thought his research may give a medical reason for the decline of a civilisation." The report continues: "As a nation grows richer, the bacteriologists argued, its population may grow less disease-resistant and the nation decline."

Although Dr. Kahn may refuse to speculate, we will. If his theory is correct then by reducing standards of living, employers are bestowing great benefits on the workers by increasing their "resistance." What self-sacrifice do the rich perform! They deny themselves the benefit of good health so that the poor may continue to enjoy that rich glow of well-being that "resistance to disease" brings. On the other hand, if they decide to be selfish, police will be required to control the queues of rich people waiting to sell what they have and give to the poor. One could hardly blame them.

The fact that disease flourishes in the poorer countries, as all statistics on the subject show, must be disregarded. It is true that sickness carries off more poor people than rich; it is true that the expectation of life among the poor is less than amongst the rich. But this does not matter. So long as they have more "natural antibodies" than the rich, then every poor man can die happy, if prematurely.

Bernard Shaw, in his preface to "Doctor's Dilemma," tells of a man who conducted an experiment to decide how long a horse would live if it had a leg amputated periodically. The horse died before the experiment was completed. The poor will go on dying, perhaps, before Dr. Kahn's experiments are completed and another scientific discovery will founder on the obstinacy of its subject. S. A.

"IF WE ALL 'AD 'ALOS RAHND OUR 'EADS"

FROM time to time the traditional meeting spots in London are enlivened by the appearance of a character answering to the name of Bullbrook. He is the Conservative Party candidate for a Kensington constituency, calling himself a Conservative Trade Unionist. In the summer he is a frequent visitor to the historic Whitestone Pond, on the heights of Hampstead Heath.

Thus it came to pass, on a wet and windy Sunday evening in June, that Mr. B., with a crony, was to be observed making rather strenuous efforts to get somebody to listen to him there. After some time local members of the Socialist Party arrived and proceeded, perhaps unwisely, to attempt to succeed where Mr. B. had failed.

The S.P.G.B. member who opened this meeting, studiously avoiding any mention of his opponent's platform, or even existence, launched straight off, rather austere, into a description of the difference between the interests and the wishes of the working class.

The effect on "Old Bob" can best be described as catastrophic. With reckless abandon he poured forth everything he could think of (which, admittedly, isn't much) at the S.P.G.B. The only just way to reproduce this tirade would be by tape recorder. As it boils down, shorn of the abuse, trivial personalities, and shallow street-corner gossip, to about two real points, there is no need to. Master Robert's objections to Socialism amount to these:—

(1) Nobody would work.

(2) Everybody would take what they want.

The members of the Socialist Party of Great Britain are a lot of "silly boys," he thinks. For which one member, at least, thanks him; it being so long since he was mistaken for a boy. "They are alright, of course, and they mean well" and "Socialism would be alright if we all 'ad 'alos rahnd our 'eads, but we ain't!"

These "silly little boys" don't know that nobody does "anythink for nothink." "Where," asked our critic, "would we get coal?" "Who would go down the mines?" "Who would work at the docks?" if they got no money for doing it?" "Who would work at all if they could just go and take what they want?"

Now we must admit that Mr. B. has a point when he says people would not work for money if they could get their needs without it. But of that, more anon!

When Mr. Bullbrook, the Conservatives' nominee for Parliament, says that the only reason that anybody does anything is to get money he is starting something.

Incidentally, we could help him in his choice of examples. We should have thought the last places to get money were the mines and the docks. So do the miners and the dockers. In both cases, in recent years, the powers-that-be have complained that men were not

going there because they could get more money elsewhere.

Just by way of a change, we will accept Old Bob's case and see where it leads us. Not because Bob says it. Quite the contrary, what Mr. B. said on that Sunday is essentially what every opponent of Socialism, from Churchill to Pollitt and Sir Herbert Read would say. Even to the emphatic insistence when challenged afterwards personally "that he *does* understand Socialism." "Yes! I do." He is typical, not exceptional.

A number of cases occur to us immediately we start thinking about Mr. B.'s contention. These are but a few. Among the institutions Mr. Bullbrook's Party maintains are those of the Monarchy and the Clergy. Do we rightly understand Mr. Robert to mean that the only reason that Queen Elizabeth II went through all that ackamarackus with the Archbishops and the Peers at Westminster Abbey was to get money? We thought she had enough already, before starting.

Wealthy members of Mr. Bullbrook's Party published a statement by the Queen that she wished to "dedicate herself to the service of her people." Does Mr. B. really mean that she omitted to add "for money"?

The prize-winning ditty in the *News of the World* competition declared that the Queen has a "heart of gold," but we suggest that Mr. B. goes a little too far if he accepts this literally.

But what about the Clergy? Can it really be true that Dr. Fisher and all those other thousands of men only minister to their flocks for money? Well! according to Mr. B., "Yes!" because "nobody does anythink for nothink."

Some time ago this contributor was the somewhat surprised recipient of a communication from the Conservative Mayor of Hampstead, inviting him to become a voluntary member of the Civil Defence Service. In this letter, the Mayor said that volunteers would receive no money, but would derive great satisfaction from the thought that they were helping their neighbours, and maintaining the spirit of comradeship which grew up during the war. Whatever is the good of a Conservative asking people to join something they will not be paid for—when another one, Mr. Bullbrook, knows quite well they will not do so. It's a waste of the Council's money, and the postman's time. Why the Conservative candidate for N. Kensington has not told the Tory Mayor of Hampstead, we cannot say.

But then, we must also ask whether Mr. Bullbrook's rule applies to Mr. Bullbrook himself. It may well be that he is a Conservative candidate, as he says himself, "to get money." For this unique honesty we thank him. We've never heard any other Tory say it. What the electors will think is their business, since the basis of

democracy can only be the willingness of candidates to carry out the mandate of constituents.

Socialists completely deny Mr. B.'s assertion, which stems from ignorance of the function of money. Money is not the power-plant of Society—it is the pipe-line. It is not an end—but a means of acquiring other things.

The amount of money which things cost is not in the things themselves—but the amount of Labour they contain. Labour is the driving force of Society.

It is evident that even in that form of society where money is the keystone. Capitalism, society would not hang together without the basic social characteristics of the human animal, which has to co-operate to live. Thus, for example, poor people continue to rear children even under the threat of war or poverty. Why, if Bullbrook is right, Churchill was wrong! He only offered 'em blood and sweat, toil and tears," but no money, for winning the war. Incidentally, is Churchill also Prime Minister only to get money?

How can we explain the people who have so much money that it nearly drives them barmy? Do they want more money?

Poor old Bob! Under Socialism men will go to the docks and the mines not to do the least they can for the money, but the most they can for their fellow-men, which, socially speaking, means themselves. The better they work the more social approval they will get. In Socialist society men (and women) will be appreciated for what they ARE, not what their fathers were. These people will not "ave 'alos rahnd their 'eads," but knowledge inside them. This knowledge will show them that the best way for the individual to prosper is to co-operate generously with others. They will produce goods by their labour, and consume them in the leisure they find most agreeable.

Therefore, our opponent is right in one thing at least. When he says that people will not work for money—when they can get the things which money buys to-day, without it.

They will make Mr. Bullbrook Curator of the Mint. He can go round collecting up all the odd coins which careless people may have left lying about.

HORATIO.

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—2

The Babeuf Conspiracy

THE prisoners were working feverishly at their tasks on the walls of their prison. The escape had to be made that night or it would be too late. The plans for escape had been well made. The guards had been won over, tools had been smuggled in to the prisoners, and their friends outside would be waiting this night with horses to carry them away to some place of safe hiding. There were only a few hours left.

If they could not escape that night they were doomed. Their trial, which had lasted for weeks, would end the next day and none of them were in doubt of the verdict. It would be death for some and, at least, transportation and imprisonment in some penal colony for the remainder. During their trial they had made little effort to defend themselves. Instead, they had used the courtroom as a forum to expound their political views and publicise their activities. Now, it was at an end and this planned escape was their only hope.

They were accused of an attempt to overthrow the government by armed force. To make their present troubles worse, their attempt had almost succeeded and the government was now taking no chances. In fact, a number of the government's political opponents had been arrested and thrown into prison with the insurrectionaries even though they knew nothing of the attempted insurrection, merely because it was a convenient opportunity to get rid of them.

The year was 1796. The revolutionary fervour that had swept France during the past few years was petering out. The wealthier section of the new French capitalist class was in the saddle and was tightening its grip on the reins. In all revolutions where the wealthy capitalists struggle against the feudal aristocracy they rely for support upon their less wealthy capitalist friends and the peasants and workers. They hide their own political objectives and pay lip service to the political and economic aspirations of their supporters. In the

early stages of the struggle all these elements are united, but as soon as the feudal opponents are subdued each element strives to achieve its own separate ambitions. The capitalists join hands and use their newly won political power to wipe out any organisations that the peasants or the workers may have created. Thus they stabilise the revolution by checking any tendency to carry it to limits dangerous to themselves.

That was the position in France in 1795. A number of active revolutionaries who voiced the ideas of some of the workers had formed an organisation known as the "Equals." Francois Noel Babeuf, who later called himself Gracchus Babeuf, was the prime motivator in this organisation. During the revolutionary period he had thrown away his comfortable livelihood and reduced his family to poverty in his enthusiasm for his cause. He had published a paper called "The Tribune of the People" mainly at his own expense, and, through its columns, had not hesitated to violently attack most of the leading men of the revolution. Danton, Robespierre and Hebert had experienced the venom of his pen.

Babeuf, Germain, Darthe, Antonelle, Buonarroti, Didier, Massart and others met at the "Pantheon" in the working class quarter of Paris and became known as the Society of the Pantheon. The society grew in numbers until the government became alarmed and closed the meeting place and dissolved the society.

Babeuf and his friends then set about building a secret organisation to prepare an insurrection. Their object was mainly communistic. They claimed that political freedom was useless without economic freedom and that could only be achieved by the wealth of the community, in particular the land, being held in common by all the people. They published much literature, most of it written by Babeuf. In the "Manifesto of the Equals," "Analysis of the Doctrines of Babeuf,"

"An Opinion on our Two Constitutions," "Triumph of the French People against its Oppressors," "Address of the Tribune to the Army," and other broadsheets, they set out in detail their insurrectionary objectives and their plans for the future society.

In those days the idea of social evolution was little known. Social organisation was conceived to be the result of a contract between the members of society. If the existing contract was unsatisfactory it became necessary to devise a new one.

The plans for insurrection went ahead at full steam. Darthe and Germain were Babeuf's right hand men. They introduced to the secret society a certain George Grisel who was an army captain stationed at the camp at Grenelle near Paris. Grisel was given the task of winning over the troops at his camp. Germain secured the allegiance of the legion of police and other military sections became attached to the insurrectionary movement.

Seventeen thousand men, all experienced fighting men, were eventually enrolled and Grisel ensured the support of the troops at Grenelle. In addition the workers of Paris were expected to rise as soon as the insurrection was under way. Men from the provinces joined and a few members of the government flirted with the movement. Supporters were attracted by the claim that the constitution instituted by the Robespierre government in 1793 and since discarded, was to be re-introduced.

All was ready. The organisation was well prepared. Officers and generals were appointed and detailed plans were prepared. Everyone waited. The leaders hesitated. Then came catastrophe. George Grisel proved to be a government agent who was passing on all the detailed information to his employers. The troops at Grenelle were not recruited to the movement and the government struck at the eleventh hour by arresting all the leaders.

A feeble attempt to get the insurrection going without the leaders was soon suppressed and afforded the government the excuse for hunting down all those suspected of revolutionary sympathies in Paris and its environs, and many executions took place.

The leaders were imprisoned at the Abbaye and Temple prisons and later taken in cages like wild beasts

to the town of Vendôme where they were to be tried.

Then, with their trial almost over, came the plan for escape. The digging and scraping was finished; a breach was made in the prison walls and they were ready to make their get-away. Someone had been careless in hiding the evidence of their work on the prison walls. The authorities became suspicious and the attempt to escape was thwarted.

So, the prisoners entered the court room to face the tribunal for the last time. The court was crowded with sad sympathisers of the prisoners. Even the foreman of the jury was sentimentally affected. Fifty-six of the accused were acquitted, five were condemned to the island fortress of Pelée, and Babeuf and Darthe were condemned to death. As soon as the verdict was announced Babeuf and Darthe attempted to commit suicide by stabbing themselves with improvised daggers made in prison. They were seized and only succeeded in wounding themselves. The next day they went manfully to the guillotine and their beheaded bodies were thrown by the executioner into the sewer.

Thus ended one of the first attempts by the workers to give expression to their class interests. Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, referring to Babeuf and his movement had this to say:

"The first direct attempts of the proletariat to attain its own ends, made in times of universal excitement, when feudal society was being overthrown, these attempts necessarily failed owing to the then undeveloped state of the proletariat, as well as to the absence of the economic conditions for its emancipation, conditions that had yet to be produced, and could be produced by the impending bourgeois epoch alone. The revolutionary literature that accompanied these first movements of the proletariat had necessarily a reactionary character. It inculcated universal asceticism and social levelling in its crudest form." (Communist Manifesto, S.P.G.B. Edition, page 88.)

W. WATERS.

Books for students:—

"The Last Episode of the French Revolution," by Ernest Belfort Bax.

"The Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels," by D. Ryazanoff.

"Ten Essays on the French Revolution," edited by T. A. Jackson.

"Blanqui," by Neil Stewart.

THE WELSH NATIONALIST PARTY AND THE WORKERS

THE Welsh Nationalist Party claims to stand in the interest of the workers in Wales. It is not concerned with the fact that because of the international nature of Capitalism, workers are exploited everywhere and therefore the attack against exploitation must be on a broad front recognising no national barriers.

The W.N.P. naturally cannot possibly possess this world outlook being a parochial organisation not recognising exploitation as being synonymous with Capitalism.

Its members base their policy on the importance

of the National State, demanding National Status for Wales arguing that with its achievement the workers' troubles will end.

They conveniently forget (at least they never mention) that Wales was as much oppressed (i.e., the people) when she was governed by the Princes of "Welsh blood" as she has been ever since the statute of Ruddlan: that she has been oppressed in common with the workers of other parts of the British Isles from the inception of Capitalism is not so much history but a tale of yesterday and today. If the Nationalists get their way it will be the tale for tomorrow as well.

In early mediaeval Welsh society there were two classes—the Free and the Unfree, the Princes (Tycoysogion) knights and gentry (Boneddwy) and the slaves (Caethion). The Nationalists completely ignore the progression of history commencing with the gens and developing into the nation, and the fact that the development of World Capitalism tends eventually to break down national barriers. "The society that organises production anew on the basis of free and equal association of producers will put the whole state machine where it will then belong: in the museum of antiquities, side by side with the spinning wheel and bronze axe" (Engels: "Origin of the Family and the State").

The Nationalists, flying in the face of scientific analysis of society, base their appeal on two planks—the Cultural and the Economic. They have a certain following for their cultural policy among certain University "Intellectuals" and religious leaders whose minds dwell on the delights of the Mediaeval past and the "simple grandeur" of rural life. They are enthusiastic about the fostering of the ancient Welsh language and literature. (The writer is pleased to include himself in the 40 per cent. who retain command over the Welsh tongue, and enjoys reading Welsh classical literature but what this has to do with combating Capitalism is difficult to see.)

It is when we come to the economic policy that we realise that this party of "Patriots" is just another party of Capitalism. A reading of its publications in both English and Welsh has failed to produce anything new apart from somewhat peculiar suggestions for the better administration of Capitalism.

Completely ignoring the fact that the "freedom" of the workers in self-governing states such as Finland, Denmark, New Zealand and Eire is simply freedom to remain an exploited, wage earning class, the Welsh Nationalists proudly present their pamphlet "Can Wales afford Self Government?" The first reaction of a Socialist born and bred in Wales and knowing something about the past and present of the country, is that the question is irrelevant. One could afford to buy a thousand aspirin tablets with which to poison oneself but that is no argument for taking them.

The question that Socialists in Wales put to the Nationalists is—if Wales succeeds in obtaining Home Rule (i.e. Dominion Status though there is a wing of the Nationalist movement out for Republicanism) what will be the political outlook of the Welsh Government? Will industry be carried on for profit? Will monetary considerations rule the field of planning and production? The answer contained in the above mentioned pamphlet, is clear—all the machinery of Capitalism will be in operation; nothing will have changed basically.

Welsh and other readers should not be carried away by cleverly worded statements (intended to woo the large industrial army of Glamorganshire miners) suggesting sympathy with "Socialism" whereas all they mean is nationalisation.

The choicest section is the part "proving" the possibility of setting up home rule. Eire is given as an example. In Eire, the firm of Rowntrees came to the rescue by building a factory in Dublin exploiting 600

workers. Exploitation, under these circumstances is not exploitation because the Irish now have "Home Rule"!

As to the question "where's the money to come from?" the section dealing with the floating of Ireland's first National Loan takes some beating: "... the Irish Government courageously determined to float its first National Loan ... the Loan was immediately over-subscribed. Among the biggest subscribers were ... Church of Ireland, Trinity College Dublin, and Guinness, Ltd." (so drink up, begorrah your troubles are over!).

The Irish Free State Government, in 1927, found itself having to float a second National Loan amounting to £7 million; £4 million of which was taken up by Irish and English Capitalists and £3 million in New York "the whole of the New York issue was over-subscribed within two hours" (our italics). It is natural that the Capitalists of U.S.A. should take out a stake in a paying proposition.

The Welsh "patriots" therefore have no compunction in pawning the freedom of the new National State to outside Capitalist interests right from its very inception.

What security do they offer for such loans? They mention the great resources of wealth beneath Welsh soil, "only waiting for timely stimulus and support," together with the skill and industry of Welsh workers. They say that "income derived from Wales by companies with headquarters in London" would be taxed. What a revelation! The "foreign" Capitalists are to be allowed to exploit the Welsh workers first, and then are to be taxed. The Welsh wage slave will have the satisfaction of knowing that "his" government has rented his labour power to outside interests in order to receive the wherewithall to keep him alive!

We agree that as in the case of Eire the future Welsh Government need not worry about finance; it will be sufficient to advertise that the Welsh workers are up for sale; that they are available to any Capitalist concern that cares to come and exploit them—as they are at the present time.

Is there a case for Welsh Nationalism? From their own Capitalist point of view there might be—it might be more profitable to operate Capitalism from Cardiff than from London.

From the point of view of the Welsh worker, the position would remain broadly the same—he would remain the vehicle creating surplus value. He could—if he has a mind to—stagger to the mine or steel mill in the grey dawn singing triumphantly the words of the Welsh National Anthem and consider himself as having achieved his emancipation. On the other hand he could get down to the fundamentals of Socialism and throw his exploiters out whether they scream Nationalism, Patriotism, or any other brand of moonshine—in Welsh or English.

The land of Wales could raise its voice in a mighty chorus which would reverberate through the hills and valleys and beyond. "Workers of all lands. Unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to gain."

This is the real message of freedom: these words spell freedom in any language.

W. BRAIN.

ABOUT BOOKS

THE newcomer to the study of Marxian economics frequently finds that Marx's own works are rather heavy going. He searches around for books by other authors who may be able to propound Marx's theories in a more easily readable form. Unfortunately, during the past eighty years, there have been many who have sought to simplify Marx or to tell the world what, in their opinion, Marx really meant. The total product of their labours would justify Marx in demanding to be saved from his friends.

If the student is determined to approach his studies through the medium of secondhand interpretations of the theories, we can save him much wasted time by directing him to the soundest of the books on the subject.

Probably the most useful work of this nature is Karl Kautsky's "The Economic Doctrines of Karl Marx." There is little we can say about this book except that it was written expressly for the purpose for which the student wants it and it is a job well done.

Next in order of merit is "The theoretical system of Karl Marx" by Louis B. Boudin. Boudin does not deal exclusively with Marx's economic doctrines. He devotes a few chapters to the materialist conception of history, the social revolution and to some of Marx's critics. Boudin quite correctly makes his early chapters on the materialist conception of history serve as a brief introduction to the study of the workings of the capitalist system. The usefulness of this book to a new student is limited because the author devotes quite an amount of space to replies to critics of the Marxian doctrines. These replies are extremely useful to anyone who has a grounding in the study but are likely to leave the novice a little bewildered. All the same, the book is good and cannot be excluded from a list of this nature.

Julian Borchardt has attempted to present "Capital" in a more readily digestible form by treating it in a different manner to other writers. He has taken a number of chapters from the three volumes of "Capital" and re-arranged them in an order which, he claims, will make them more easy to assimilate. He has eliminated some of Marx's repetitiveness but has not attempted to alter the wording. Borchardt also claims, quite correctly, that the majority of those who read "Capital" do not get farther than volume one, but that volumes two and three are necessary for a complete understanding of Marx's theories. Whether Borchardt's work will be found easy going is doubtful, but for those who cannot avail themselves of the three original volumes it is useful. The only edition of this work that we are able to trace today is collected with some short writings by Frederick Engels and Lenin and Marx under the title "Capital and other Writings of Karl Marx," and published by The Modern Library, New York.

Ernest Unterman has written a book entitled "Marxian Economics." Unterman deals with his subject more historically than the previously mentioned authors, in fact over half of his book is devoted to an historical approach to the Marxian economic theories. It cannot be taken as a substitute for "Capital" but rather, as the author claims, a popular introduction to it.

There is one book which, because of its title and

its availability may attract a student's attention. It is "The Meaning of Marxism" by G. D. H. Cole, published by Victor Gollancz. This is a re-hash under a new title of Mr. Cole's, "What Marx Really Meant" published in 1934. As a Marxist Mr. Cole would make a good plumber. What he thinks Marx meant is a lot different to what Marx said. A detailed criticism of "What Marx Really Meant" appeared in the SOCIALIST STANDARD in June, 1934. It stands equally well for the later book. The student should avoid Mr. Cole as an interpreter of Marxism.

Despite the good qualities of the first four books we have mentioned none of them are a real substitute for Marx's original work. If the student has time, diligence and enthusiasm we recommend that he bypasses these attempts at simplification and gets down to his studies with the three volumes of "Capital." We recognise that a study of Marxian economics is not simple and that there is some justification in the criticism that Marx's style is heavy, but his work cannot be adequately compressed into a book of a couple of hundred pages. Much of the so-called heaviness of Marx's writing is due to the fact that he approaches all his points from every conceivable angle, neglecting no avenue of argument to prove his case. It is that which gives rise to the repetitiveness that scares away some of his readers.

The best of the translations of "Capital" are those by Ernest Unterman and by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling. The translation by Eden and Cedar Paul which is used in the Everyman's Library edition published by J. M. Dent has some minor faults but cannot be condemned because of them.

In conclusion, there is a useful little book that is worthy of mention. It gives an answer to many of the criticisms of Marx's theory of value. "Boehm-Bawerk's Criticism of Marx" by Rudolf Hilferding published by the Socialist Labour Press. Of course, this book cannot be read until one has an understanding of Marxism, but, after the elementary phases of study, it can be useful for clearing away a number of cobwebs.

W. WATERS.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Provincial Propaganda Tour. Full details of this summer's tour will be given in next month's issue. Some of the details are available, but it will be more comprehensive to give all the information together.

Croydon Branch. Details of meetings throughout the next two months are shown elsewhere in this issue. In case readers do not obtain next month's copy in time, it is a good idea to note all the meetings for reference.

St. Pancras Town Hall. Please make a note of the meeting being held on Sunday, 4th October, and bring along as many friends as possible. The subject is interesting, the hall large and comfortable—so make every effort to support the Party.

Conway Hall. Bloomsbury Branch are holding a public meeting on Friday, 16th October—details elsewhere in this issue.

P. H.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire. Sec. c/o 29, Lincoln Ave., Belfast, N. Ireland.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

Reading

Will members and sympathisers interested in forming a group in this district please write to J. A. O'Brien, 31, Frensham Green, Shinfield Rise, Reading.

LEWISHAM LECTURES

At Davenport Hall, Room 1, Rushey Green.

Fortnightly on Mondays at 8 p.m.

November 2nd: "The Class Struggle."—A. Turner.

November 16th: "Socialism and Psychology."—J. McGregor.

November 30th: "Workers' Standard of Living."—E. Hardy.

SOCIAL AND DANCE

At Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Saturday, October 17th, at 7.30 p.m. Admission Free.

CONWAY HALL,

Red Lion Square, W.C.1.

Friday, October 16th, at 7.30 p.m.: Title and Speaker to be announced.

ISLINGTON BRANCH DISCUSSIONS.

Co-op. Hall, 129 Seven Sisters Road, N.7.

Thursdays at 8 p.m.

October 8th, "Socialism and Violence"—S. R. Parker.

October 22nd, "Class Struggle"—A. Turner.

SOUTHEND BRANCH.

Open Forum, Tuesdays, October 6th and 20th, commence 8 p.m., at the Co-op. Hall, Essex Street, Southchurch Road, Southend. All visitors welcomed. Enquiries to Branch Secretary.

PUBLIC MEETING.

Islington Central Library, Holloway Road, N.7.

Wednesday, October 14th, 8 p.m.: "Culture and Progress."—Speaker: R. Coster.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN OCTOBER

Wednesdays: Goslett Yard, (off Charing Cross Road,) 8.30 p.m.

Wednesdays: Gloucester Road (adjacent to Station), 7.30 p.m.

Thursdays: Notting Hill Gate, 8 p.m.

Fridays: Earls Court (opposite Station), 7.30 p.m. Stamford Hill, 8 p.m.

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m. Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m. Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m. Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m. White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11 a.m. East St., Camberwell, 12 noon. Hyde Park, 3 p.m. Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m. Clapham Common, 2.30 p.m. and 6 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT I.P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.

Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields. Exmouth Market.

Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.

Thursdays: Tower Hill.

Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

LECTURES AT HEAD OFFICE,

52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, on

Sunday Evenings at 7.30 p.m.

Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.

October 18th: "Mass Production."—A. Turner.

October 25th: "The Kinsey Report."—R. Coster.

November 1st: "Human Nature."—J. McGregor.

CROYDON BRANCH.

The following lectures will be given at 8 p.m. at Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, Croydon (near W. Croydon Stn.), on Wednesdays:—

October 7th: "The Declaration of Principles."—R. McLaughlin.

October 21st: "The Chinese Revolution."—F. Offord.

November 4th: "Marxian Economics."—J. McGregor.

November 18th: "Value, Price and Profit."—G. Brynolf.

GREENFORD MEETING

"War, Poverty and Unemployment.—The Socialist Answer."

Greenford Library, Oldfield Lane, Greenford, on Thursday, October 15th, at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Com. C. May. All welcome.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desiring enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 7th and 21st October, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2, (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmers Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cottis, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road School, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to P. Hallard, 37 Heyworth Road, E.15.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. "Franelle," Raweth Lane, Raweth, Shot. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Bereford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (1st and 15th October) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 74, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. E. M. P. Hirst, c/o H.O., 52 Clapham High Street.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Wellesley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, N. Taylor, 35, Coulsdon Road, Coulsdon, Surrey.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. Fulham meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Alkenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 12th and 26th October, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. at the Bethnal Green Town Hall, Cambridge Heath Road. Letters to A. Iveney, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Burnt Oak, Edgware, Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Ilkington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. P. Hart, 54, Ashdale House, N.4.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec., 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. 9 Vicarage Rd, Kingston (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 39a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lecture and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 6th and 20th October, Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate; Sec. J. M. Breakey, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Welling-ton Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 591 Vol. 49 Nov., 1953

NORTH PADDINGTON
BY-ELECTION?

THE PASSING SHOW

THE MARGATE LABOUR
PARTY CONFERENCE

WOMEN'S WEEKLY
MAGAZINES

WHAT IS RELIGION?

STOP THIS BUSINESS

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

Gunboats Off Guiana

IN HIS BIOGRAPHY of the late Earl Baldwin, Mr. G. M. Young recalls the ageing Prime Minister, weary of the eternal rounds of diplomacy, crying out for the days when the sight of a British gunboat was enough to quell any disturbance in a foreign land. One wonders what Baldwin would have said of the events in British Guiana which have aroused such interest over the past few weeks, and where not a gunboat but a cruiser, two frigates, an aircraft-carrier and over seven hundred troops are involved.

The first hint of the recent trouble in the colony appeared in the newspapers of Sunday, 4th October, which reported the movement of the cruiser

DEBATE

SOCIALISM v. CAPITALISM

A. G. Jenkins, City Editor of the *Sunday Chronicle*
opposed by

Socialist Party of Great Britain (Speaker A. Turner)

FULHAM TOWN HALL (Opposite Fulham Broadway Station)

at 7.30 p.m. Wednesday, November, 11th 1953

All Welcome

Admission Free

H.M.S. Superb and connected it with the events in British Guiana. After the usual denials the Colonial Office admitted that the cruiser, carrying five hundred troops, was bound for Georgetown and that the expedition was planned as a result of the activities of the People's Progressive Party (P.P.P.)—an organisation with alleged Communist Party sympathies—which had easily won the elections in April of this year. These elections were the first to be held under the colony's new constitution, which gave the right of universal suffrage whilst leaving the Governor, Sir Alfred Savage, a large measure of reserve powers. But the roots of the trouble go deeper than any electoral victory.

South America, the Caribbean and the West Indies have for a long time been a source of frustration to British commerce. Up to the beginning of the 20th century the area was virtually under the control of Great Britain: since then, British power and influence have steadily declined. Markets which were once dominated by British goods are now largely exploited by American, French, German, Japanese, Dutch and other interests. British investment has fallen away seriously.

In many South American countries independent capitalist groups have arisen to gain freedom from foreign domination. There is a demand for capital, as opposed to consumer goods. The resultant native industries are producing commodities which compete with, and finally close the markets to, those from overseas. In South America this process has been assisted by stern import tariffs.

This situation has caused concern to many British governments. In May of this year a government commission reported on the development of economic independence in Latin America. The Queen's speech to the opening of Parliament in November, 1952, had already promised measures to strengthen economic ties with the area.

Thus British Guiana, as the only British colony in South America, and one containing rich sources of sugar, bauxite (aluminium ore), gold and silver, assumes a considerable importance in the efforts of British industry to re-establish itself in an area in which it was once pre-dominant.

But with its economic development and particularly with the industrialisation which has accompanied the exploiting of the bauxite deposits, there has arisen in British Guiana the familiar demand for independence from British rule. The return to power of the P.P.P. with their programme aimed at ultimately making British Guiana a republic was a triumph for them that has proved short-lived.

In pursuance of this policy and in opposition to the traditional ruling class of sugar planters and business men the P.P.P. took up the cause of the recognition of the Guiana Industrial Workers' Union. A strike was called, with the support of the P.P.P. After a period of negotiation and attempted appeasement of the P.P.P., the colony's economy was deemed to be seriously threatened by the stoppage. Then it was that the British government acted: troops were landed and the constitution of British Guiana was suspended. In amongst Whitehall's allegations of disturbance and violence the colony's inhabitants went happily to watch the cricket match against Trinidad.

The suspension of the constitution seems to have been rather hasty and has met some opposition—already the *Manchester Guardian* and (before the event) the *Economist* have expressed doubts on the wisdom of such a policy. The commission of inquiry which is to be sent out with instructions to frame a new constitution can, presumably, only recommend a form which will exclude the possibility of the P.P.P.—

SOCIALISM AND THE CLASS STRUGGLE

THE object of the S.P.G.B. is Socialism, a definition of which is given in every issue of the *SOCIALIST STANDARD*, together with a Declaration of Principles, which show how society is constituted and how the working class must organise to overthrow the capitalist system and introduce Socialism.

As shown in the Declaration of Principles, the class struggle originates out of economic conditions; all workers take part in the class struggle, whether they are conscious of it or not and whether they like it or not.

or any similar party—again achieving power: the British government is apparently determined that only administrations of which it approves will be allowed in the colonies. Mr. Oliver Lyttelton, the Colonial Secretary, has said (*Manchester Guardian*, 10/10/53) that "Her Majesty's Government are not going to allow a Communist State to be organised within the British Commonwealth. Our friends can take that as a definite statement, and our enemies can attach to it all the importance that I think they should." Thus it seems that, if further elections are allowed to take place in British Guiana, they will be rigged to ensure a result favourable to British interests. This, together with the expulsion from the colony of the correspondent of the *Daily Worker* shows the outlook of the British ruling class when their interests are threatened.

It is little wonder that the workers of British Guiana, poorly paid and wretchedly housed, have no love for British rule and have fallen for the appeal of the P.P.P. The case for independence must seem overwhelming to them. Doubtless they are unimpressed by the attack made on the P.P.P., that it has failed in six months to carry out reforms of living conditions which the British administration has neglected for over 150 years. But the experience of Eire, India and other countries should have had its lesson for them. National independence will not abolish workers' poverty.

The P.P.P., as the expression of the desire of a potential British Guianese capitalist class to exploit for itself the mineral wealth and workers of the colony, free from British interference, follows a familiar pattern. Its methods, such as the playing upon the sugar workers' grievances, the extremes of poverty and wealth and other causes of discontent, are also well known. Certainly the British Guianese workers have nothing to gain by supporting the P.P.P. in its struggle to replace one set of masters by another.

But whatever the outcome of this struggle, it seems fairly certain that more trouble is in store for the sunny lands of the Caribbean. The neighbouring country of Venezuela has for some time claimed British Guiana for its own: a wartime agreement entitles the U.S.A. to keep an aeroplane and seaplane base in the colony: and much capital investment will be needed soon, as the Guianese industry finds its feet. This conflict of interests could, as in so many other cases, cause British Guiana to become yet another sore spot in a sick world.

IVAN.

It is always necessary to remember that the class struggle is two-sided, that it is not only the workers who organise to try and maintain and improve their position, but the capitalist class at all times do likewise and so far they have done it more successfully than the working class. W. Liebknecht, in his pamphlet, "No Compromise," recognised the class struggle carried on by the capitalists when he wrote: "The class struggle which the proletariat carries on is only a counter struggle in self-defence to resist the class struggle of the bourgeoisie

against the proletariat; and the end of this struggle by the victory of the proletariat will be the abolition of the class struggle in every form."

Victory over capitalism will never be attained by being on the defensive; the class struggle carried on by non-Socialist workers on the economic field in Trade Unions, etc., will never lead to Socialism, indeed, that is not the aim of non-Socialists. They struggle to maintain and improve their conditions under capitalism and the capitalist class struggle to maintain and improve theirs, but history has proved that on the economic field the capitalist class has most of the advantages.

Socialists, by taking political action against the capitalist class, switch from the defensive to the offensive. The class struggle is both industrial and political, the latter its revolutionary form. On the political field the workers of all countries have but one interest, and that involves winning political power and dispossessing the master class. The supreme conflict with that class leaves no room for sectional antagonisms between workers.

The Declaration of Principles of the Socialist Party were drafted by Socialists with a great deal of thought and knowledge of the development of society. The Declaration of Principles allow for no compromise with

the capitalist class, and offers no reforms for improving capitalism.

The strength of the Socialist Party rests on acceptance of the class struggle, that the working class is exploited and oppressed by the capitalist class, and that within capitalist society effectual reforms which will put an end to class government and class exploitation are impossible. As Marx so correctly stated, "When the class struggle is pushed on one side as a disagreeable 'crude' phenomenon, nothing remains as a basis for Socialism but 'true love of humanity' and empty phaseology about 'justice'." Pity for poverty, enthusiasm for equality and freedom, recognition of social injustice and a desire to remove it, are not Socialism.

The basis of society to-day is the class ownership of the land, factories and other means of living. The central point of our attack is this social base, the class ownership of the means of life. The possessors must be dispossessed.

To Socialists, political action is the action aimed at getting control of the governmental machinery for the purpose of introducing Socialism. In other words, the prosecution of the class struggle in a revolutionary way.

D. W. L.

THE PASSING SHOW

British Guiana

Recent events in British Guiana have shown us how feeble is our rulers' real attachment to democracy. The Guianese workers are not to be allowed to support a party which might try to end the present dependence of Guianese capitalism on British capitalism, and to make Guiana instead an associate of the Soviet Union—that is to say, a party which might try to take Guiana out of one capitalist bloc and into another. There is no question at present, unfortunately, of a struggle in British Guiana between Capitalism and Socialism. According to reports from the colony, the "People's Progressive Party," the leaders of which have been dismissed from their positions as ministers by the Governor, is, in the terms of British politics, a cross between the Labour Party and the Communist Party; and neither of these parties is a supporter of Socialism. The policy of the "People's Progressive Party" is the usual ragbag of reforms and improvements in capitalism: it promises better wages and housing, and is known to favour some measure of state-control over the sugar estates. Nothing in its propaganda, its policies or its activities gives it any claim to be a Socialist Party.

Reforms

Now if the "People's Progressive Party" had kept to its reforms, it would probably have been left alone. British capitalism, and the subsidiary capitalist systems in the colonial empire, will tolerate a limited amount of reformism; in fact they work all the better for a few reforms. In the Gold Coast the Convention People's Party is in office, in the eastern region of Nigeria the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, and in the western region the Action Group. The People's

Progressive Party differs from these simply in the Communist affiliations of some of its leaders.

Risk of Bloodshed

It has been alleged that the action of the British Government in sending troops and warships to British Guiana, and suspending the Constitution, were prompted by a danger to life and limb within the colony. For example, the statement issued by the Colonial Office on October 6th said that there was a "risk of bloodshed" (*The Times* 7-10-53; following quotations are also from *The Times* unless otherwise stated). But this seems to be highly improbable. On October 5th, just before the troops were sent, the *Times* correspondent reported not the beginning but the end of a crisis: he said "the threatened constitutional crisis ended last week when the House of Assembly met . . . Elected ministers who had previously walked out from the House returned after consultation between the leader of the House, the Speaker, and the Governor." (5-10-53). Two days later the correspondent was even more emphatic:

"Georgetown is perfectly normal and quiet to-day, and the excitement in London and elsewhere is not comprehended. There are no signs of impending crisis such as would justify a revocation of the constitution, nor of any disorder necessitating additional troops. An influx of newspaper correspondents is expected in the next few days, but they are likely to be disappointed at the absence of colourful events" (7-10-53).

The *Times* correspondent was even afraid that the sending of troops into a peaceful colony might alienate "moderate" opinion:

"Thoughtful observers feel that, unless the show of force is justified by the subsequent revelation of an imminent plot, it may well alienate public opinion that was turning from the P.P.P." (8-10-53).

Thus it seems clear that there was no immediate

fear of bloodshed; the ministers were sacked, the verdict of the Guianese voters was overturned, and the troops marched in solely because of the fear of the defection of the colony to another capitalist bloc.

Truth

The events in British Guiana have been instructive from another point of view. For many years "Truth" has been equalled as an object for lip-service in political speeches only by "Freedom" and "Democracy." But to run a capitalist system without telling lies is to do the impossible. The sending of troops to British Guiana followed this approximate timetable:

October 2nd: The cruiser Superb left Bermuda for an undisclosed destination.

October 4th: The Sunday papers said that the cruiser was bound for British Guiana. The Superb left Jamaica after taking on troops and refuelling. British Caribbean headquarters announced that it was to take part in manoeuvres off Jamaica on October 8th. Caribbean Area Forces headquarters denied the rumour that it had been diverted for emergency duty in the South Atlantic (6-10-53)—that is, that it had been sent to British Guiana.

October 7th: The cruiser Superb arrived in British Guiana.

It might, of course, be said that it was impossible in the circumstances to reveal the destination of the cruiser in advance. But this is to admit the argument that the telling of lies is an essential part of the running of the capitalist system.

Trieste

In this connection, consider also the question of Trieste. The Western Powers—Britain, the United States and France—made a joint declaration in 1948 that the whole territory should go to Italy. Now, these Powers say that this declaration was made solely because of the difficulty in arranging to set up a Free Territory of Trieste, as agreed in the Italian peace-treaty (14-10-53). But this is very far from the truth, and is alleged only to conceal the history of opportunism which lies behind the attitude of the Western Powers to the whole Trieste question. At the Italian peace-treaty, the already strained relations between the West and the Soviet bloc ruled out the possibility of the West agreeing to hand over the whole disputed area to Yugoslavia, then a member of that bloc. The solution found was to create a Free Territory, with its own Governor. But shortly after the 1948 Declaration, Tito broke with the Cominform. This put the Western powers in a quandary. For while they have insisted all along that their intention was merely to do justice to all parties and to do what was best for the people of Trieste, in fact their attitude has always been ruled by expediency. They were not concerned with any minute advantages one way or the other which might accrue to the workers of Trieste by their being exploited by Italian or by Yugoslav capitalism; they wished to award the prize of the strategic and economic advantages which lay in the port of Trieste and its environs in such a way as to secure maximum advantage for

themselves. Since 1948 this attitude has led them into much difficulty, since both Italy and Yugoslavia are either allies or potential allies of the Western bloc, and either would take great offence if the whole area were not given to it.

Opportunism

The attitude of the Soviet Union has been equally opportunist. When Yugoslavia was apparently firmly fixed in its alliance with Russia, the latter made every effort to secure Trieste for its protege; but since Tito's break with the Cominform, Russia has strongly supported making the area a free territory, thus preventing the access of strength which would come to either country if it were given Trieste.

In such a game of power politics, with each great Power fighting unashamedly for its own hand, the interests of the Triestine workers are ignored. Both Italy and Yugoslavia seem to be prepared to go to war over Trieste, with all that that would entail in suffering to the people of both countries and of Trieste itself, rather than let the other country obtain undisputed control of Trieste and its immediate hinterland.

The Socialist Party's position is clear. In a Socialist system of society such a situation could not arise. National boundaries would disappear, since they are only maintained by the necessities of a property-owning system. No States would wrangle and threaten over Trieste, since States would have dissolved along with the property system of society which alone gives rise to and maintains them.

Negotiate from Strength

The Labour Government initiated a large programme of rearmament, and the Conservative Government has continued it, under the slogan of "negotiating from strength." The workers were assured that, although it might be thought that heavy re-armament would probably lead to a third world war, this was not so; peace would best be secured by piling up the munitions of war, until this country and its allies were so strong that its potential enemies would not dare to attack it. In advocating this solution, our politicians showed that they were still hankering after the conditions of the mid-nineteenth century; then, because Britain had embarked upon its Industrial Revolution decades before any other country, it was by far the strongest country in the world. There were no "big" or long-lasting wars because no other country could for long dispute the supremacy of Britain. But this was merely an ephemeral phase, a phase which could only arise where there was one giant and a number of pigmies; in the modern world, where there are a number of giants, to hope to restore the conditions of a hundred years ago is to be doomed to disappointment.

Increased Strength—on both sides

What has now happened to the "Negotiating from strength" argument? The Western bloc thought that if it had the atomic bomb it would be secure from attack; but then Russian scientists also evolved the atom bomb. The Western bloc thought that if it had the hydrogen bomb it would be secure from attack; but now Russia has exploded the hydrogen bomb also.

As President Eisenhower said on October 8th:

"The Soviets now have the capability of atomic attack on us, and such capability will increase with the passage of time . . . The Soviets now possess a stockpile of atomic weapons of conventional types and we must furthermore conclude that the powerful explosion of August 12 last was produced by a weapon, or the forerunner of a weapon, of power far in excess of conventional type" (9-10-53).

So where do we go from here?

The march to war

The moral is simple. In a capitalist world there

is no security against war. If one state tries to build up such a strength in armaments that other states would not dare to attack her, the other states will be afraid that the first country plans aggression, and will in their turn build up armaments. And although an armaments race does not make war inevitable, it creates an atmosphere of fear and suspicion in which the unavoidable disputes between capitalist states can more easily cause war. Thus a heavy armament programme adopted in an effort to find security by one capitalist state among many, in fact leads not to security but to a greater likelihood of war.

A.W.E.

THE MARGATE LABOUR PARTY CONFERENCE

NATIONALISATION was the issue at Margate. It is the issue at all Labour conferences. It is difficult to see how it can be otherwise; for Nationalisation apart what else is there left to discuss within the Labour Party? Housing! Education! The Health Services! These are not the things which separate the Labour Party from the Tories and oft times the Labour Party from itself. Only Nationalisation can do that.

True the Tories have nationalised in the past and might conceivably do so again if circumstances warranted. But for them Nationalisation measures have been a means to an end. The Labour Party for political purposes have made it an end in itself, although the Margate conference saw a full scale strategical withdrawal from that position.

Mr. Woodburn, M.P., made a clumsy attempt to cover the withdrawal by telling the conference that "Nationalisation was not Socialism." Mr. Woodburn may know that but the history of his party is writ large in the monumental confusion created by it in failing to make any real distinction between them. The speeches and writings of Labour leaders over the years bear damning testimony to this confusion. He also added, "Nationalisation is merely a means to an end and not necessarily the best means." Whatever implications one likes to draw from that remark the fact is that the Labour Party in the past has viewed Nationalisation as an end; a social goal, a political ideal. Its 1918 Manifesto, "Labour and the New Social order," proclaimed as its aim the continued extension of nationalisation acts to ever widening spheres of industry. And until recent years the Labour Party never substantially departed from it. Hitherto the Labour Party regarded its policy of Nationalisation as one of principle not expediency.

The militant convictions of the Webbs and old Fabians who contributed considerably to the Nationalisation policy of the Labour Party are lacking among present day Labour leaders. Two terms of Labour administration have dispelled from the minds of the "administrators" any notion of the talismanic powers of Nationalisation. The Webbs are dead in more senses than one.

The Nationalisation by the Labour Party in its first term of office of coal, electricity, gas, transport

looked impressive to many people. When one realises that these industries have previously been subject to a greater or lesser degree of governmental regulation, the "revolution" appears rather a palace one.

Because there is a natural tendency towards monopolistic growth and practises in Capitalism. Capitalist governments are faced with certain problems. For instance the ownership and control by private monopolies of such things as gas, coal, electric power, transport, etc., are a powerful weapon for exacting toll from the vast majority of capitalist enterprises who are utterly dependent on these things. Moreover private monopolies pursue their interests regardless of the requirements of other capitalist sections. As a result they disturb the balance of capitalist economy by disturbing what is termed the free play of the market and so intensify the anarchy of capitalist production. The State is therefore compelled to intervene in order to curb this monopolistic power. State action along these lines is then both an attempt to protect the various sections of capitalism and to ensure the smoother running of the system from the standpoint of the requirements of Capitalism as a whole. Nationalisation is one way of bringing this about.

So far so good; but when the Labour Party is confronted with making good its promise to extend Nationalisation to other spheres of industry it finds itself faced with formidable difficulties. Capitalism now presents to the Labour Party a different aspect than when viewed through the rose-tinted glasses of yesterday's propaganda.

Once the Labour Party used to damn what they termed the present competitive system. Now they have discovered unsuspected virtues in "competition." Thus Mr. Strauss tells us that the Aircraft industry benefits the country by rivalry and competition in aircraft designs. Any measure of greater centralisation in that industry may have adverse effects, he said. Nationalisation, Mr. Strauss declared, is not so much a way of dealing with the problems of industry but a rather escapist way of avoiding them. And this is the distilled wisdom of years of Labour Party propaganda.

Now it seems to leaders of the Labour Party that Nationalisation can offer no solution for the successful survival of British capitalism in the world's markets. It appears that high quality manufacture, speciality of

design and responsiveness and adaptability to market requirements are the basic essentials. In fact the trend of Labour Party opinion seems to suggest that Nationalisation with its mammoth structure and bureaucratic dictation might be an hindrance rather than an aid. One spokesman at Margate illustrated this point by saying that it was the mammoth's inability to adapt itself to changing conditions that lead to its extinction, its place being taken by the more agile elephant.

While the Labour leaders might propose a new line for the Labour Party's general acceptance it will not be able to easily dispose of the old one. The policy of state Capitalism, miscalled by the Labour Party, state socialism, has deep rooted attachments for many of the rank and file. Popularised and propagandised by the Labour leaders for nearly fifty years it has acquired an ideological significance not to be easily dismissed. For many workers the old State-capitalist policy of the Labour Party conjured up in their minds visions of a "A New Era" in which the working class would in some way or another come into its own. It will not be easy to divert the energy and enthusiasm this has called forth into other channels. Then of course there is Mr. Bevan. And Mr. Bevan is still Mr. Bevan. For that reason the appeal of Mr. Greenwood

for the Labour Party to close its ranks and stop internal dissension will not we think deter Mr. Bevan from his private ambitions. He will continue to keep the pot of Nationalisation boiling by the advocacy to use his own phrase—"Socialism through the old hard agony of Public Ownership and control."

This of course will embarrass other Labour leaders because it will be difficult for them to admit that they no longer believe in such things. Because the Labour Party's claim for political support rests on the fact they represent themselves in the light of a progressive party as distinct from the Tories, they must aspire to the semblance even if not the reality of having a social goal not envisaged by their political rivals.

In the past the old policy of State Capitalism served them well in this respect. The difficulty will now be to find a substitute goal which will be as effective. One thing appears certain, however, that is whatever their political calculations and figuring might be. Nationalisation will be for the Labour leaders a recurring decimal.

One other thing is also certain that is for the workers the golden promise of a Labour summer is and will remain unfulfilled. It is the long hard winter of capitalism which lies ahead.

E.W.

WOMEN'S WEEKLY MAGAZINES

"Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!
... Heaven save us from a lower stage."

Thus the aged Wordsworth on illustrated books and newspapers. His tetchy complaint was uttered in 1846, when developments in printing technology and the growth of railway travel were creating both the demand and the technical means for cheap, bright periodicals. W. H. Smith opened his first bookstall in 1848; "light reading" became the popular—and, after the Education Acts, the universal—means of passing time. Wordsworth saw only the beginning of it all.

Something like nine hundred magazines are published in this country at the present time. The most popular is "Reveille," which is bought every week-end by three and a half million people; next are "Woman" and "Woman's Own," each with over two million readers, and there are half a dozen other weeklies with circulations of more than a million.

Fashions in popular reading change from generation to generation. The most successful and the most ephemeral magazine is the one which measures most accurately what the general public wants; you can please quite a lot of the people for quite a lot of the time, but you must be prepared for a drop in circulation when the nature of public consciousness alters. On the other hand, the longest-lived magazines are those with restricted appeal: "The Countryman," "The Sporting and Dramatic News" and "The Spectator" are examples. Women's magazines have the best of both worlds. Their appeal is limited, but limited to half the community; they have the certainty of a known field of interest, and the field is large enough to necessitate the devices and techniques that make for mammoth circulation.

There are nineteen weekly magazines for women. "Home Notes," the oldest, first appeared in 1894, and the foundation dates of the others are fairly evenly spread between then and 1937, when "Woman" was first published. Looking at them over the years—or even at their predecessors of Wordsworth's day—one is mildly surprised at how little they have altered. Here is "Woman's Weekly," 1912, price a penny: "Great New Year's Gift Number," with a Gibson girl on the cover. Patterns; a powerful new serial by Annie S. Swan; readers' best recipes; lace work; home nursing; health and beauty page; Dainty Cupid Leap Year Charm given free to subscribers; "Ethel" replying to girls' problems and my-dearing them for all she is worth.

The difference between the weekly and the monthly magazines is chiefly of pretentiousness and price. If any feature can be said to mark the frontiers, however, it is the "help page." The monthlies try to do without it; to the weeklies, it is life's blood. A lot of people believe that the problems are made up by the magazine's editorial staff. In fact, "human problems" is the busiest of all the advice services—legal, child-care, beauty and furnishing are others—which are offered by the women's magazines. A weekly of average popularity receives anything up to two hundred letters a week; most are answered by post, and only a selection is printed. The confidantes are all homely women with homely-sounding names: Mrs. Jim, Mary Grant, Evelyn Home. It is easy enough to snigger at the help page with its jealousies and frustrations and frailties, its girls in trouble, possessive mothers and lonely virgins. The problems are real enough to those who have them, and the answers, for the most part, are sensible and to the point.

Every magazine devotes at least one other page to letters. Readers write about their romances, their hobbies, their families, their jobs, their favourite food, their hopes and ambitions. Half-a-guinea or a guinea is paid for each published letter; as a link with readers' consciousness, they are probably cheap at the price—they may even explain why a women's magazine seldom goes out of business.

It is on this pabulum of everyday life that the stories thrive. The "Garden of Allah" type of escape-story, best-selling between the wars, was never really the stuff for women's magazines, though occasionally it appeared. The great bulk of the stories have workaday and domestic life as their settings. There is no obvious fantasy, no escapism into past, future or distant worlds, and the harshest realities of this world—war and unemployment—come in as often as they are topical. It takes some time to realize that this realism is an illusion; that the ordinary life of the stories is not ordinary at all, that the hard facts are not hard at all, and that the whole is a fantasy-world into which most of its readers can easily project themselves.

The domestic life of these stories is life on the fifteen-pounds-a-week level—what most people consider to be "middle-class" life. Nice houses with bathrooms and telephones, plenty of good clothes, tasteful furniture and the rest. True, the heroines sometimes are shop assistants or married to clerks; the only possible conclusion is that they are living above their incomes. Nobody wears Marks-and-Spencer dresses, lives with shoddy furniture, lacks elementary education or becomes unattractive from continual child-bearing. It is the daydream world of "if-only"; if only we won a few thousand on the pools, if only Henry's firm promoted him, etc.

Unemployment and war never really make much difference. The most terrible thing about unemployment in real life is that the wolf does not just howl at the door, but comes right in and stays; in the women's magazine story, Henry always finds another job and a new day dawns bright and clear. War puts the hero in uniform as a pilot or a commando officer (never a private in the Pay Corps); coming home wounded, he leans on a stick or has one arm in a sling. The atmosphere is that of a fancy-dress party where the guests have nothing to declare but their ingenuousness.

The world of women's magazine stories can be summarized as something like this. You are an attractive, smartly-dressed woman of your own age, sitting in the lounge of a sizeable semi-detached house. There are flowers on the sideboard and "Vogue" on the coffee table. If you are single, in a little while you will bath and put on your new evening frock because a handsome young man in well-cut clothes and a Jaguar is going to call to take you out to the theatre. If you are married, your two nicely-spoken children are playing hide-and-seek in the garden; Henry—tender, wise and patient—will soon be home from the City; you will never become a worn-out drudge because your home has all the labour-saving gadgets advertized in the women's magazines.

That is approximately the nature of the make-believe. There are two things which must be noted about it. The first is that it is a mistake to assume, as many people do, that the writers who create and popu-

late this world are bad writers. Actually, theirs is one of the most highly skilled branches of journalism in the world; it is a trade, not an art, and they are first-class practitioners of it. The second thing is that the make-believe obviously feeds a real and continuous hunger. A well-to-do person in urban society has access to variety of experience, a member of a healthy primitive community has depth of experience; a working-class woman usually knows neither. The craving for romance is the craving for either or both of those things. James Joyce's "Ulysses" contains a remarkable passage in which a working girl named Gerty MacDowell has a romantic daydream; the dream is a series of images and phrases straight from the pages of innumerable women's stories.

Roughly one-sixth of the space in an average magazine is taken up by stories. Advertisements cover something like half the total space, and most of the remainder is occupied by articles on female and domestic affairs—cookery, dress-making, health and beauty, fashion, make-do-and-mend, child care, plus one or two items such as a sentimental verse and a horoscope ("Your financial position will improve about next Friday"). Reading these columns of advice on how to bring up baby, how to stay good-looking and what to cook for supper, one sees how vastly public consciousness has altered in the past half-century. The outsize family, with its yearly childbirth, its unkempt, fagged-out mother and its bread-and-jam diet is nearly non-existent today in Britain (except in areas with large Catholic populations, where ignorance and fear keep it going). Most people nowadays really care about their standard of living and really want to bring up their children well; the findings of nutrition experts and child psychologists make their way to, and to some degree are acted upon by, working people. The convention of "what was good enough for my father is good enough for me" has largely disappeared. In 1903, women's magazines offered cheap patterns for dust-caps and aprons; in 1953, they explain how to make dresses which, from a short distance and for a short time, look as if they came from Norman Hartnell. A great deal of ignorance and dirt and superstition (in spite of the horoscopes) has disappeared; people of all ages are more humane, more responsible, and more conscious of their environment.

Popular reading matter always has a good deal to tell us about the social life and attitudes of its time. What springs most irresistibly from a study of women's magazines is how unchanged are the basic concerns of life for working-class women. In spite of suffrage, admission to almost every career and profession, and the consequent thirty-year clamour over equality of the sexes, the fundamentals are still the same: finding husbands, rearing children and managing homes. Going to work is not an exchange for these concerns, it is an addition to them, and married women who go to work do so mostly to help finance their homes. "Woman's place is in the home," which is usually put forward as an arguable proposition, is really nothing of the sort, but a simple statement of fact.

Living in a working-class home means being involved in the perennial problem of insufficient money. For the single woman, it limits severely the probable

(Continued on page 169)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

NOVEMBER,



1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

NORTH PADDINGTON
BY-ELECTION ?

AS we understand the sitting member is resigning we will contest North Paddington again at the By-election. Here is a grand opportunity for those who agree with us but, for one reason or another, are unable to join the Party. They can give practical effect to their sympathies in a variety of ways. We need money and help. We need immediately as much money as we can get to enable us to pay the £150 deposit, to book halls for meetings, to have an Election Special, candidate's address, posters, handbills and leaflets printed, as well as to pay the other incidental expenses connected with propaganda at election time. We also need as much assistance as possible for addressing envelopes, distributing literature and so forth. The more money and assistance we can get the more we can do.

Will all those who are interested in using this opportunity to spread our socialist message get in touch with the Parliamentary Committee at Head Office.

We have already contested North Paddington three times and on each occasion have put in a great

deal of effort. Members and sympathisers gathered together and worked with enthusiasm. We carried on the struggle with vigour making it clear that our outlook is unique. That we are solely concerned with making our socialist message as clear as we can and that we are not interested in the customary electioneering stunts, rabble-rousing or boosting. We make an appeal to the understanding and not the passions of people. Our object is to clear away the mud that has been spattered upon the socialist idea; to make plain how desirable is the world we are working for in which everything that is in and on the earth will be the common possession of all mankind; to spread our conviction that Socialism is the only practical solution to the problems that afflict the world today, that it is capable of being put into operation as soon as the mass of people understand and want it, and that it is well worth the effort needed.

It is not just the votes that matter; it is what is behind the votes, and this By-election gives us an opportunity to get our Object and Policy before a larger number of people than we can reach in normal times.

Will all members who can help in the election contact Head Office right away for information about the arrangements that are being made. Although we do not know yet the date of the By-election we are making various arrangements including the booking of the Metropolitan Theatre, Edgware Road, for an eve of the poll meeting to which we are inviting each of the other candidates to state his case or send a representative to do so.

Comrades and sympathisers let us use this opportunity once again to show the strength of our convictions and the depth of our enthusiasm for the cause we cherish.

★
50 YEARS OF SOCIALISM

Paddington Branch is organising a series of meetings in 1954 with the general theme—the 50th Anniversary of the Party's foundation. The meetings will be at Denison House on the first Sundays in January, February, March and April.

The subjects are to be in sequence. The first meeting will cover the development of the Party and a review of the events of the last fifty years. The second one will examine socialist theory, in the light of modern developments. The third meeting will have as its theme—the 1950's, the way we live today, our work and leisure. The last meeting will deal with the implications of the socialist future, and also the purpose of the Socialist Party.

There will be two speakers for each of the meetings. More details will be given in next month's *Socialist Standard*.

★

WOMEN'S WEEKLY MAGAZINES—continued from p. 167
area for finding a husband; for the married woman, it means having to make the money go round, and leading an extremely flat and unvaried life in the process. It is this economic blockade from the real world of experience that leads to escape into a fantasy-world, where domesticity is bliss, every cloud has a silver lining and there is true romance for all except the bad girls.

The moral obviously is not to pooh-pooh or condemn women's magazines as purveyors of baby talk and life-by-proxy. They pass on fairly necessary information and advice about domestic matters, and have probably been influential in spreading more

responsible social attitudes. Most people of today want things to be better; "good enough for the likes of us" is a sentiment that no longer has much share in working-class consciousness. As for the stories, possibly they are bilge. That does not, however, answer the question why the majority of working-class women need to have a fantasy-world created for them, and a large number need to have decisions on the management of their lives made for them by a completely unknown Mrs. Jim or Evelyn Home. The truth obviously is that there is something fundamentally wrong with a society in which such needs are so widespread.

R. COSTER.

TERROR AND CULTURE IN AFRICA

London,
S.W.1.The Editor,
Sir,

One of your readers has sent me your paper. I am at a loss to understand why, but I am appalled at the ignorance displayed by your leading article: "Savagery, Black and White." I am not a Socialist, but no doubt an intellectual case can be made for Socialism. Palliation of savage atrocity, however, is no part of Socialism—at least Socialism as I have always understood it. The Mau Mau you are presenting as a constitutional nationalist movement to your readers (who mostly have no first-hand knowledge of Africa), is a terrorist organisation directed as much against Africans, and indeed against their fellow tribesmen, as against Europeans. Do you really suggest that ripping a child from its mother's womb and cutting off babies' heads and drinking their blood is reminiscent of the ceremonies of Free Masonry?

I realise that this silliness is not due to any ill-will but simply from a lack of knowledge.

The statement that the Kenya African is far behind his brother on the West Coast is strictly accurate. The Africans on the East Coast fifty years' ago when the Europeans first went there had no knowledge of the wheel or of the fulcrum. Their social organisation was extremely simple. Indeed they were primitive people in the true sense. On the contrary, the West Coast African can be described as barbarian in the technical sense, but not primitive. The Ashanti kingdom, for example, may have been bloodstained, but it was a complicated organisation approximating to the Lombard kingdom, which, savage though it may have been, has after all left us an imperishable legend. The Kikuyu have no art, whereas the West African sculptured heads (of which examples can be seen in the British Museum), are universally regarded as masterpieces. From whence arises these differences between the East and West African? Not, of course, from any inherent difference in ability, but from the fact that the West Coast has been in contact with Western civilization from at least the Sixteenth Century, and Portuguese influence is obvious in their art and techniques. It is, after all, the contact of cultures which makes civilization. What would have been the civilization of these

islands if we had had no contact with the Celts, Romans, Saxons, Danes or Normans, but had remained completely isolated and inhabited by the aborigines of these islands, whether they were Picts or Britons?

Before the war many good Socialists and honest men were seriously misled about the state of Europe by insisting on regarding every human being as a good trade unionist with a hundred years of industrial organisation and two hundred years of chapel-going behind him. Many present-day Socialists are made to look foolish when they insist on regarding savage and barbarian peoples in the same way as their predecessors did the Nazi and Communist movements. Hodgins' "Italy and Her Invaders"—incidentally a most fascinating book—is a much better preparation for the understanding of present-day Africa than are the publications of the Fabian Society.

I remain,

Your obedient servant,

DIANA SPEARMAN.

REPLY TO MISS SPEARMAN

In her criticism of the article "Savagery, Black and White" which appeared in the *SOCIALIST STANDARD* for last December, Miss Spearman reads into the article statements that are not there. The Mau Mau is not presented as a constitutional nationalist movement nor does the article palliate "savage atrocity." The key to the article is contained in the last sentence: "Thus imperialist chickens come home to roost!" The Africans in the past have been treated with ruthless savagery by the whites; is it surprising that some of them remember and try to repay in kind?

To explain the source of violence and cruelty is not to palliate it. We condemn all violence and cruelty, civilised and uncivilised, and we are advocating a world in which they will have no place. Miss Spearman, however, is prepared to condone some cruelty and violence because it leaves behind a legacy of culture!

Miss Spearman says "I am appalled at the ignorance displayed in your leading article." But she does not give any examples of the alleged ignorance. The article takes conflicting statements from authoritative sources and points out the contradictions. Is that ignorance? Miss Spearman has allowed her emotions to obscure her critical faculties and reads into the

article what was never even suggested. The writer of the article quoted from *The Times* a description of the Mau Mau oath-taking and then points out that *this account* is reminiscent of the secret oath-taking ceremonies of the Freemasons. There was nothing in this ceremony about ripping a child from its mother's womb. But Miss Spearman does not go back far enough in her description of the West African culture. Genuine West African culture was destroyed by the slave traders who visited Nigeria and the adjacent districts in the 16th and 17th centuries. Over 80 per cent. of the negro slaves came from this area and what were they like? According to anthropologists they "came from the economically most advanced, artistic, and socially complex areas of Negroid Africa. The economic, organizational, and aesthetic levels of these districts were in general comparable to the slave empires of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome." (Page 72 "Outline of Anthropology," by Jacobs and Stein, 1948.)

Then we are told by inference that we must not worry about the bloodstained Ashanti kingdom because, like the Lombard kingdom, it left an imperishable legend of culture behind. Under those circumstances, apparently, the cutting off of babies heads is palliated! But Miss Spearman does not go back far enough in her description of the West African culture. Genuine West African culture was destroyed by the slave traders who visited Nigeria and the adjacent districts in the 16th and 17th centuries. Over 80 per cent. of the negro slaves came from this area and what were they like? According to anthropologists they "came from the economically most advanced, artistic, and socially complex areas of Negroid Africa. The economic, organizational, and aesthetic levels of these districts were in general comparable to the slave empires of Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece and Rome." (Page 72 "Outline of Anthropology," by Jacobs and Stein, 1948.)

The Portuguese and other civilized ruffians destroyed these cultured communities, branded their cultured members with irons and herded them into slave ships to undergo long voyages packed in stifling holds. So many died of their sufferings on the voyages that many of the ships had to jettison a large part of their human cargo on the way. The following extract from Sir Alan Burns' "History of Nigeria" (1942) will give a little idea of what these negroes suffered:

"The cruelties practised by white men in this trade are almost unbelievable. The condition of the crowded hold of a slave-ship during the long 'middle passage' in tropical weather across the Atlantic would explain the reason why scores of slaves died on every voyage, and why others would, when the opportunity offered, leap overboard to escape sufferings worse than death. Men and women were flogged to compel them to eat, and hot irons were occasionally used to force them to open their mouths and swallow the food which they were too sick at heart to eat willingly. They were flogged again to make them dance and sing in order that they should not brood over their misfortunes. Unbounded licence was given to the officers and crews of slavers as regards the women; the men slaves were fastened together in pairs by handcuffs and leg-irons, and frequently were stowed so close together as to admit of no other posture than lying on their sides. The height between decks was sometimes only 18 inches, so that the slaves could not turn round or even lie on their sides. In about the year 1785 one ship took on board 700 slaves, who were 'so crowded that they were obliged to lie one upon another. This occasioned such a mortality among them that, without meeting with unusual bad weather, or having a longer voyage than common, nearly one-half of them died before the ship arrived in the West Indies'" (pages 78-79).

Against this record of misery Miss Spearman sets the Portuguese influence upon the art of the Benin people! If she can shed civilized hypocrisy for a moment let her compare the thousands upon thousands

of negroes from West Africa—men, women and children—who were torn apart and suffered the miseries of the slave ships and after, with the atrocities which are placed at the door of the Mau-Mau and she must admit that, bad as the latter are, they are puny in comparison with the atrocities of the civilized. But she need not even go back so far. Whatever the Mau-Mau may have done to babies and women is trifling in comparison to what was done to Japanese women and children at Hiroshima and Nagasaki and at other places during the Great War and in Korea.

Since Miss Spearman is so worked up over Mau-Mau ferocity let us call her attention to another example of civilized ferocity from a different part of the world.

Sir Francis Head was Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada during the first half of last century. After his experiences there he wrote a "Memorandum on the Aborigines of North America" which he included in his book "A Narrative" published by John Murray—London, 1839. From this memorandum we take the following extracts:

"The fate of the red inhabitants of America, the real proprietors of its soil, is, without any exception, the most sinful story recorded in the history of the human race; and when one reflects upon the anguish they have suffered from our hands, and the cruelties and injustice they have endured, the mind, accustomed to its own vices, is lost in utter astonishment at finding that in the red man's heart there exists no sentiment of animosity against us, no feeling of revenge;"

"So long as we were obtaining possession of their country by open violence, the fatal result of the unequal conquest was but too clearly understood; but now that we have succeeded in exterminating their race from vast regions of land, where nothing in the present day remains of the poor Indian but the unnoticed bones of his ancestors, it seems inexplicable how it should happen that, even where their race barely lingers in existence, it should still continue to wither, droop, and vanish before us like grass on the progress of the forest in flames."

Sir Francis Head's memorandum was sent to the Government of the day but nothing happened, the interests involved were too powerful. He wrote his book when he returned to England to call attention to the plight of the red men but it was wasted effort, the red men continued to be harried until in despair they retaliated, as best they could, in the seventies and eighties, providing writers with material for "Westerns" but doing themselves no good in the end. They were up against the civilized lust for wealth and it was too much for them. Is Miss Spearman prepared to overlook the violent and cruel wiping out of the red men on account of American culture?

Miss Spearman tells us easily that the social organisation of the Kenya African was extremely simple. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, in his introduction to Peristiany's "The Social Institutions of the Kipsigis" (published in 1929), by no means supports this view:

"Anthropology in Kenya has been left to the initiative of individuals. Our knowledge of the peoples is not a good advertisement for scientific *laissez-faire*. Although Europeans have been settled in Kenya for about half a century we know very little about the social structure of its peoples," page xix.

Peristiany's book, the record of first-hand observation, reveals that the social organisation was anything but "extremely simple."

Before Miss Spearman goes out of her way to tell

us we are silly she should delve more deeply into the subject herself.

We may add that "a much better preparation for the understanding of present-day Africa" is neither Hodgkin nor the publications of the Fabian society but a study of white imperialism in Africa and books by

such investigators of native life as Junod, Hopley, Rattray, Peristiany, Schapora and the like.

Finally, if Miss Spearman is genuinely concerned about atrocities today let her attack the father of them all—Capitalism with its insatiable lust for profit.

GILMAC.

ABOUT BOOKS

SOME old-timers in the Trade Unions together with a few in the rebel fringe of the Labour Party, even a few of the older members of the S.P.G.B. have been heard to claim that certain novels read in their younger days were the means of guiding their steps in the direction of Socialism.

Foremost amongst the books which are accorded this honour is Robert Tressall's, "The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists." We have been asked a number of times to draw this book to the attention of younger readers of the SOCIALIST STANDARD, although, if a person is already a reader of the SOCIALIST STANDARD he will not glean much education from Tressall's book. But he will get a world of fun and a clear insight into conditions in the building and house decorating trades during the first decade of this century.

The book was first printed in 1914 and has been continuously reprinted ever since. It is a story written round the life and work of an imaginary Frank Owen, a house painter and a Socialist (if we excuse a little confusion in his theory) and the small band of his work-mates. Owen takes every opportunity in arguments with his mates to expound his Socialist ideas, doing so very simply and effectively for the reader, but hopelessly for his mates.

Certain chapters in the book are more than humorous, they are uproariously funny and there is deep tragedy, too. It is argued by some that this is the story of Robert Tressall's own life. Certainly Tressall was a house painter and, from what little we know of his life there are grounds for the claim. If you are one of the very few who have not read this book, do so. It is still in print and in plentiful supply. If you are one of the old ones who read it years ago, read it again. We have just re-read it before writing about it and we had great fun.

Another book that gets commended for similar reasons is Jack London's "Iron Heel." This is an

altogether different book from Tressall's. It has been published in many editions since it first appeared nearly fifty years ago and the latest is still to be seen on bookshelves.

Jack London tells his story through the mouth of the wife of a man called Ernest Everhard who was a "Socialist" who would fit very nicely into the present day Communist Party. It is a story of the development of Capitalism in America projected into the years ahead of the time of telling. It tells of the ever increasing exploitation and subjugation of the workers by a capitalist oligarchy called "The Iron Heel," of the hardening and sharpening of the class struggle and of two bloody insurrections that result in the defeat and massacre of the workers.

Despite the quite good lectures and arguments of Ernest Everhard and some of his associates, this book would never, on its own, convert anyone to Socialism. Its main appeal is emotional and by that means it might urge a man to study class society seriously. But a worker whose approach to social problems is purely emotional is a ready prey for political parties which rely on the emotional upsurge of their supporters and not on a clear understanding of working class interests.

A third book in this category is Upton Sinclair's "The Jungle," also still in print after forty-seven years. This book was mentioned in these columns in May, 1953. It is a story of the American stock yards and, although it is a remarkably fine story, the same criticism applies as to Jack London's book.

Whether these books are useful to put in the hands of a non-socialist worker with the hope of leading him, by their guidance, along the path to an understanding of Socialism, once he is on that path he will enjoy reading them and we have little doubt but that most convinced Socialists have read them. If they haven't, then we can recommend them to an honourable place on the book shelf.

W. WATERS.

STOP THIS BUSINESS!

A VISITOR from another world, or a really long-term Rip Van Winkle, knowing little of the complexities of Capitalism, might imagine that the problem of satisfying the needs of mankind is now as good as solved. Modern methods of production would appear to have made possible, if not a superabundance, then at least enough of the material things that most people would accept as a reasonable standard of living.

But, of course, our visitor would be mistaken. It is not enough to produce or to be able to produce tooth-brushes and shoes and houses to ensure that those who need such things do get them. No, a socially useless, dehumanising, wasteful, cruel, unpredictable, man-made institution called a (world) market effectively stands in the way. Despite the fact that people are in need, for instance of shoes, if the supply is greater than the

demand to buy, then some shoes will be sentenced to economic death—they might as well not have been produced at all.

In recent years the tendency has been towards a "buyers' market," as it always is after the devastation wrought by a major war has been patched up. The export drives are in full swing. In fact rival nations are taking so many swings at each other over who is to capture which markets that the result is a *melée* of no mean proportions.

One of the tricks used to cajole overseas buyers into placing their orders with British capitalists is the employment of hospitality. There is really no other word to use than "employment," though it does sound strange when used in connection with something as apparently unbusinesslike as hospitality. This year the sellers of British goods are having to roll out their largest-ever red-white-and-blue carpet to keep pace with the hospitality offered by foreign rivals. They must entertain and throw parties on a lavish scale in order to get round buyers. The *Daily Mirror* (20.6.53) describes the general atmosphere of these parties:

"It's exactly like entertaining a rich aunt . . . But like rich aunts these affairs are so often trying. Even when you're not talking business, both you and your guest know perfectly well that the only reason you're together is that you want to get at his money."

Operating on a less ambitious scale, the commercial traveller is to be found peddling his employer's goods from door to door. He, too, must preserve a friendly attitude towards his potential customer—not that he wouldn't like their relationship to be a sincerely friendly one, but the nature of the business virtually precludes that. He must never argue and must never admit to the slightest blemish in his firm's product—his job is, in fact, that of a professional prevaricator.

Each separate business deal is like an armistice in a perpetual war. Buyer and seller come together to agree on certain terms. Then they part to continue the struggle to gain advantage in the next deal. The trait of aggressiveness is prominent in those who aspire to get to the top of the ladder. Yet aggressiveness is condemned in such common remarks as "Don't push other people around," and those who behave in this way are usually hated by their colleagues. The individual is thus divided against himself, as the society of which he is part is divided against itself.

"Don't be selfish" is another common injunction, yet its opposite is also advocated: keep your own advantage in mind, and in so doing you will also be acting for the greatest advantage of all others. The idea that egotism is the basis of general welfare is one

of the basic principles of competitive society, whose antagonisms of interest reach up and down to every aspect of life.

The ability to "put across" one's personality in competition with many others is the key to success in the business world. Erich Fromm gives a good account of this in "Man For Himself":

"If it were enough for the purpose of making a living to rely on what one knows and can do, one's self-esteem would be in proportion to one's capacities . . . but since success depends largely on how one sells one's personality, one experiences oneself as a commodity or rather simultaneously as the seller and the commodity to be sold. A person is not concerned with his life and happiness, but with becoming saleable."

One of the outstanding features of private property society is the fact that activities which are means to ends have usurped the position of ends, while the ends themselves have been lost sight of. People work in order to make money in order to enjoy the fruits of their labour. Without the money there are no fruits—yet in getting the money there is little time left in which to taste the fruits, which seem to have turned sour anyway.

Examples of the business approach to social affairs are found in the ideas of all the advocates of Capitalism and, despite their superficial differences, they form a united front in opposing the ideas of Socialism. Thus the Free Enterprise Campaigners will criticize countries in which "a few men at the top decide how everyone shall live," yet their own alternative is nothing more colourful than to give you a chance "if you want to change jobs or start up on your own." On the other hand, the T.U.C. will tell you (in their recently published report on Public Ownership, p.5) that to leave industries in private hands means that decisions whether to invest, and what charges to make to consumers, may not conform to the public interest.

Socialism, by contrast, has nothing to do with changing your employer, or with who works out the best way of keeping you financially just alive. It is concerned with abolishing capitalism and with organising production and distribution solely and directly to meet people's needs. One of the most harmful effects of Capitalism upon men is that they become instruments for purposes outside themselves. They treat themselves and their fellows as commodities, with the result that they think they are as powerless to change society as the article on the shop counter is powerless to sell itself. They are not—as they will demonstrate when enough of them think as socialists do.

S.R.P.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

Provincial Propaganda Tour. During the first two weeks in August two Comrades, D'arcy and May, visited Nottingham and held very successful meetings, the weather was good and the utmost benefit was taken of this. It has greatly stimulated the work of this new Branch who are doing first class propaganda in the

district. Fourteen meetings in all were held—Literature sales £4 and collection £7.

Indoor meetings are arranged to take place at the Co-op. Halls, Nottingham, on Sundays, 1st and 22nd November, at 7 p.m.

Comrade Coster visited Manchester during the last

two weeks in August, the weather was not very good, but excellent lunch-hour meetings were held in addition to evening indoor and outdoor meetings.

Annual Delegate Meeting. This was quite uneventful this year and the numbers of visitors was rather less than usual. It is hoped to make arrangements for the Delegate meeting to be held later in the year in future, as it does appear that early in September many members are still taking annual holidays.

St. Pancras Town Hall Meeting, held on Sunday evening, October 4th, was quite successful, literature sales were good and collection of £15 taken; the meeting generally was interesting and well attended.

Bloomsbury Branch held a propaganda meeting at Conway Hall on Friday, 16th October. A further meeting at the same hall will be held on Friday, November 13th, at 7.30 p.m.

Swansea Branch are having good results from the work done by its members. Comrade D'arcy debated with a representative of the local Welsh Nationalists in October.

The Branch is trying to arrange a series of meetings at local Miners' Institutes in South Wales.

North Paddington. The Party will contest this constituency at the forthcoming by-election. Help from

Party members will be needed in addition to donations, however large or small. Offers of assistance should be made to the Parliamentary Committee and cash sent to the Treasurer at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Ealing Branch. The drive to increase SOCIALIST STANDARD sales continues to make good progress. The number disposed of during September was 27 dozen. On the first Sunday in October, five members of the Branch, breaking new ground on a big housing estate in North Ealing, sold 53 copies, the highest so far in one "outing." Only four roads were covered. Sales through newsagents are being maintained, and two of them now display the poster advertising the SOCIALIST STANDARD.

The Branch has two debates actually on the stocks and another one (with a Labour M.P.) in the offing. The first with the Finance Editor of the *Sunday Chronicle* will take place in the Fulham Town Hall on Wednesday, 11th November, and the second will be in the Ealing Town Hall on Thursday, 10th December. Our opponent on this occasion will be a representative of the Crusade for World Government.

The Branch's own Education Class has begun and will continue every Wednesday evening through November (11th excepted, see above) in the usual Branch meeting room. All these sessions will deal with aspects of capitalist economics. Every Branch member should have received a special circular about these classes and should make every effort to attend them. If this series proves successful, a further series—on history—will be arranged for the early part of the New Year.

The Branch is at present getting through a vast amount of work, and all members are asked to rally round and help spread the burden on to more shoulders.

P.H.

WHAT IS RELIGION?—(continued)

Miracles

THE poet Shelley wrote "Only impossible things are miracles, therefore we know that they did not happen because they are impossible." Nothing that is ordinary or possible is a miracle. People who escape street accidents, or have narrow escapes in war or industrial accidents and are not killed or injured, should not claim that they have had a "miraculous escape." No miracle occurs or could have occurred in connection with such events. If water gets turned into wine or runs uphill voluntarily, if dead men rise from their graves, or virgins give birth to babies—then all these constitute miracles—but not in having a narrow escape from death or injury. The two kinds of phenomena are quite different. In the case of miracles the laws of nature, hitherto so immutably harmonious, suddenly and without cause undergo a violation and

contradict everything which has gone before. For example the turning of stones into bread, or the feeding of thousands of people on two loaves and five fishes. The modern usage of the word miracle is very misleading and has nothing to do with these biblical and religious absurdities that have been alleged to have happened in the days when religion had growing pains.

Every religion has its lists of attested miracles and its quota of blind believers who accept the whole lot. lock, stock and barrel, without evidence or without wanting evidence. In fact they are usually offended if you offer them any evidence to the contrary. If proof is asked for about these miracles, it is not forthcoming, for the very good and simple reason that there is not a shred of evidence for any miracle. Of course one cannot prove negatives, and therefore it cannot be proved that

some phenomena did not at one time occur, but the onus of proof falls upon the shoulders of those who claim these absurdities.

If we look at things from a strictly logical angle we must ask, is it more possible that Balaam's ass spoke, or that a man told a lie? Is it more possible that Joshua's trumpets blew down the walls of the city of Jericho—or that somebody exaggerated? The religious believer accepts the former, while the non-believer, the materialist, the socialist, the latter.

When radio-active substances were first discovered, it was soon made known to the world that the spring which supplied the holy water at Lourdes, was radio-active. Strange how those in control and in communication with the Almighty did not know this before this scientific discovery. When a party of scientists visited the spot and tested the water, they found that it was just the ordinary water of the district, and contained no special medicinal or radio-active quality. An unfriendly visitor to Lourdes once declared that it would constitute no more of a miracle for a one-legged man to grow another leg than for hundreds of those who were alleged to have thrown away their crutches and become healed. We do not say that among these cases, there have not been those who have made through faith a profound recovery from functional disorders, but many of them were victims of "organic" conditions in which nothing short of growing a new limb could have brought about a cure.

Apart from the Catholic countries, Italy, Spain, Austria, France, etc., the only place where miracles are supposed to occur is in the U.S.A. Every few weeks a new religion is founded or a revised version of an old one is resurrected. Usually a child sees the Virgin Mary in an isolated village where life is very drab and the people starved for excitement and where the local newspapers have little sensational to offer. So the local journalists get down to it and an exaggerated write-up is given of some ghost-seeing event. The result is that the newspaper sales go up, hotels benefit, shops get record sales, churches, chapels and other local businesses including the pubs get a good rake off it, and all because of the flood of visitors into the village.

Generally speaking, "the age of miracles" is past. God who used to reveal himself to mankind at frequent intervals in his busy life, seems to have got fed up with it. He may of course be genuinely too busy, or he has concluded that his presence only convinces the lesser-educated with stultified powers of perception.

Seriously, the basis for miracles has largely been destroyed as a result of the better understanding of mankind generally. It doesn't take a lot of scientific knowledge to understand the absurdities behind the claims of any miracle.

H. JARVIS.

Become a subscriber to the WESTERN SOCIALIST, published bi-monthly. Subscription for six issues 3/9 post free from Head Office, or 6d. per copy from branches, propaganda meetings and Head Office.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Davenport Hall Room, 1, Rushey Green, Catford.
Fortnightly on Mondays at 8 p.m.

- Nov. 16th "Socialism and Psychology"—J. McGregor.
" 30th "Workers' Standard of Living"—E. Hardy.
Dec. 14th "Modern Literature and the M.C. of H."—R. Coster.

FORUMS

Forums will be held weekly at H.O. on Saturday evenings at 7.30 p.m., commencing on 14th November.

Title:— D. of P. and its Implications.
Please come early.

LEYTON BRANCH

Sunday evenings at Grove House, High Road, Leyton.

A series of lectures on
"Literature and Society."
Speaker:— R. Coster.

- Nov. 8th "Charles Dickens and the 19th Century."
" 15th "The Case of Henry Miller."
" 22nd "The War Books."
" 29th "The Art and Times of Mickey Spillane."
8 p.m. Admission Free.
Questions and Discussion.

NEW PAMPHLET . . .

"QUESTIONS OF THE DAY"

An extensively revised edition of

"QUESTIONS OF THE DAY"

with several new chapters is now on sale. 123 Pages.

Price 1/-

(Post-free 1/2d.)

PARLIAMENTARY FUND

NORTH PADDINGTON BYE-ELECTION

**Funds are
Urgently Required**

Send Donation to
E. LAKE, 52 CLAPHAM HIGH ST., S.W.4

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire. Sec. c/o 29, Lincoln Ave., Belfast, N. Ireland.

SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.

WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

PUBLIC LECTURES AT HEAD OFFICE

Sundays at 7.30 p.m.

- Nov. 8th "Capitalism and Health"—H. Jarvis.
" 15th "Socialism and the Class Struggle"—E. Lake.
" 22nd "Socialism and the Italian Renaissance"—E. Kersley.
" 29th "Is Marxism Economic Determinism"—E. Wilmott.

PUBLIC MEETING

Conway Small Hall,
on Friday, 13th November, at 7.30 p.m.
"Your Voting Strength"
Speaker—C. May.

CROYDON BRANCH

The following lectures will be given at 8 p.m. at Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, Croydon (near West Croydon Station), on Wednesdays:—

- Nov. 4th "Marxian Economics"—J. McGregor.
" 18th "Value, Price and Profit"—G. Brynolf.
Dec. 2nd "Socialists and Nature Cure"—H. Jarvis.
" 16th "The Working Class Struggle"—V. Phillips.
" 30th "Why Prices are High"—E. Hardy.

ISLINGTON MEETING

"Trade Unions and the Labour Movement,"
Speaker—E. Wilmott.
At Islington Central Library, Holloway Road, N.7.
Wednesday, 18th November, at 8 p.m.

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN NOVEMBER

Thursdays: Notting Hill Gate, 8 p.m.

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.
White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11.30 a.m.
East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Exmouth Market.
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.
Thursdays: Tower Hill.
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

HAMPSTEAD BRANCH

Blue Danube Club Restaurant,
153, Finchley Road
(nr. Swiss Cottage Met. Station).
History Class, Wednesdays at 8 p.m.
Tutor—H. Young.
Nov. 4th "Manorial System."
" 18th "Rise of Guilds and Towns."
Dec. 2nd "Enclosures"
" 16th "Industrial Revolution."

SOUTHEND BRANCH

Open Forum.
Tuesdays, 3rd and 17th November, at 8 p.m.
Co-op. Hall, Essex Street, Southchurch Road, Southend.
All visitors welcomed. Enquiries to Branch Secretary,
109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

ISLINGTON LECTURES

At Co-op. Hall, Seven Sisters Road, N.7.
Thurs. Nov. 5th "Violence and Popular Literature"—R. Coster.
" 26th "Morality and its Function in Society"—E. Wilmott.

LEYTON BRANCH LECTURES

At Grove House, High Road, Leyton,
on Mondays at 8 p.m.
Nov. 9th "Prices"—E. Hardy.
" 23rd "The Class Struggle"—A. Turner.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. THE SOCIALIST PARTY of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Gretna Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 4th and 18th November, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MA1 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law, 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmer's Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cotts, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Merton Gower, Swansea.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, R.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. "Franchise," Rawreth Lane, Rawreth, Shot. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Beresford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (5th and 19th November) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec., E. M. P. Hirst, c/o H.O., 52 Clapham High Street.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Ruskin House, Walsley Rd., (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Eccles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Eccles. Secretary, F. Lea. **Fulham** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Aikenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 9th and 23rd November, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Ivemey, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7.9 p.m., discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. P. Hart, 54, Ashdale House, N.4.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. 9 Vicarage Rd, Kingston (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushey Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 59a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton, E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 3rd and 17th November, Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate; Sec. J. M. Breakley, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding columns)

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

No. 592 Vol. 49 Dec., 1953

WHO WILL DO THE DIRTY WORK?

HUMAN NATURE

CAPITALISM'S HUNDRED VOICES

THE GERMAN SPARTACISTS

THE PASSING SHOW

Registered for transmission to
Canada and Newfoundland

Monthly

^D
4

The Truth About Bogey Men

German Capitalism Revives

"IF YOU DON'T GO TO BED like a good boy," said the nurse, "Boney will come and get you." The threat was enough and the little boy went dutifully to his slumbers. "Boney"—the contemptuous English abbreviation of the name of Napoleon Bonaparte—was, in the opinion of the nurse, the embodiment of all the world's evil. But, as she could prove, he had his uses, particularly at bedtime.

A hundred years later the little boy's great grandson was being persuaded into his bath and his bed by the threatened prospect of a visit from the Kaiser, and 25 years after that his offspring obeyed the orders of parent and nurse backed by the lurking spectre of Adolf Hitler.

And so through the years the shadow of "evil men" has hung over the world, and our troubles and tribulations have during their lifetime been laid at their doors. The honest nurse was a reflection of the attitude of her age, and the palpitations of the little boy in his bed were the tremblings of a generation in turmoil. For people have ever held that the existence of war, with all the attendant unhappiness and bestiality, is the responsibility of—at the most—a few men of base intent who are intractable in their design to conquer and suppress. This is a convenient conception of the world's affairs which requires a minimum of thought and application and lends itself readily to exploitation by subtle pens and swift tongues. A Lloyd George will thunder his purity against the vice of a Kaiser and his cry will be echoed in a million other throats. Newspapers will devote much space to the iniquities of a Hitler, and songsters will wax fat upon the profits of derisory ditties like "When That Man is Dead and Gone." The impression to be given is that to remove the man is to remove the problem—to depose or to kill a Hitler is to depose the possibility of war and to secure peace for the world. Thus arises an edifice of propaganda—but it is an edifice built upon falsity; and there is no better example of this than that to be drawn from recent events in Germany.

The Rise of Hitler

In the late nineteen-thirties German Capitalism was labouring under an intense expansionist pressure. Its industry, ever virile, had largely recovered from the reverses of the 1914-18 war, and was casting about itself for colonial sources of raw materials, and markets upon which it could sell the products pouring from the factories. The eyes of the German capitalists were upon the industrial strength of the Saar, upon the oil of the Balkans and the Middle

East, and upon the African Colonies of which they had been deprived in 1919. At every turn Germany stood thwarted by Great Britain, France and Russia. And all the time the pressure from the great industries, gathering their strength day by day. The situation was explosive and it threw up an explosive character. Adolf Hitler, with his brainstorms, his Gestapo and his concentration camps, was a peculiarly approximate expression of German capitalism and so was supremely suited to play the role of the Bad Man of Europe: the pens of Fleet Street ran warm in the depicting of this newest bedtime threat. But Hitler was only the expression of the desperate ambitions of the German capitalists; and Chamberlain and Daladier—his opposite numbers in Great Britain and France—were representative of the fears and determinations of the ruling classes in their countries. The 1939 war arose from Germany's struggle for a place in the European economic sun, opposed by the need of her opponents to keep her in the shade.

It is worthwhile noting the appeal which Hitler made to the German working class in order to arouse them to the acceptance of an inevitable war. He spoke of oppressed minorities of German nationals in the Sudetenland. He demanded the return of Germany's lost territories in Eastern Europe. He sketched the plight of the inhabitants of East Prussia, cut off by the Polish Corridor from overland communication with the rest of Germany. The phrase "the right of self-determination" flew thick in the air. It was effective matter and the German workers accepted it. They went willingly to a war in which Hitler himself lost his life. But did the ambitions which Hitler voiced die with him? We shall see.

The Same Again

Western Germany today is in a position remarkably similar to that which Germany as a whole held between the wars. Once again she is recovering (greatly assisted by her erstwhile conquerors) from the effects of a staggering defeat, and her industry is getting under way for the seas of expansion and enterprise. The *Manchester Guardian* tells us (22/6/53) that "An economic institute in Munich has recently reported that the industrial structure of the Federal Republic (of Germany) was now similar to that of the whole Reich in 1939." The same view was expressed last month in the report of the Federation of German Industry. The *Guardian's* correspondent in Bonn reported (20/5/53) that "German officials in the Federal Ministry of Economics declare that . . . the Federal Republic intends to recapture its former fruitful trade with Eastern Europe." British industry is now finding that "Western Germany is Britain's chief competitor in Europe" (*Observer* 3/5/53) and that "capital goods will meet with growing competition . . . from Germany" (*Manchester Guardian* 7/9/53). In fact, Europe is approaching a situation similar to that of 1939, with its battle of economic pressure and counter-pressure. German industry is gathering as a potential boil on the neck of French and British interests.

And this condition has thrown up another man. Not a rug-chewing maniac with a bodyguard of storm-troopers. Not an architect of a system of concentration camps. A quiet, scholarly man. A shrewd man. But personifying the interests and the mood of German

capitalism as surely as, in his day, did Adolf Hitler. The recent electoral victory of the German Christian Democratic Union and the installation of its leader—Dr. Konrad Adenauer—firmly into the position of Chancellor of the Federal Republic marks a significant phase in post-war European history. For German capitalism is resurgent and is re-asserting itself in the affairs of Europe. The election of a strong government—the most stable on that part of the Continent of Europe controlled by the Western Powers—is symptomatic of this re-awakening confidence. Says *The Economist* of 12/9/53 "Dr. Adenauer is established as the most powerful statesman on the Continent . . . All the portents suggest that for some time to come Western Europe will be led by the German nation."

The Pace Quickens

Revived German capitalism is staring with covetous eyes upon the possessions and markets of its European neighbours and as of old, its aspirations are turned towards the lands in Eastern Europe, which it formerly held, and toward the richness of the Saar . . . "German experts have worked out draft proposals for replacing the Saar's one-sided economic union with France by a more balanced relationship with the French and German economy . . ." (*Observer* 13/9/53). The current topic of German politicians is no longer the rights of self-determination. They now speak of "German reunification." From Bonn again comes the news (*Manchester Guardian* 14/9/53) that "German pressure on the Western Powers to reunify the whole of Germany may be expected to grow in the immediate future." And had not the Federal Government Minister for All-German Affairs (Herr Jakob Kaiser) already declared that "The reunification of Germany means not only the return of the Soviet zone but also of the former German territories in the East now under Czech and Polish administration." (*Manchester Guardian* 7/5/53). All this has a familiar ring. It transports one's imagination back to the dusty summer of 1939, with the newspapers and the radio reporting the speeches from the beer-cellars.

It has been said that the future of Germany decides the future of Europe. An expanding Germany in 1953 would prove as much of a nuisance to the British and French capitalist class as in 1939. We may well have not yet seen the end of Germany as the Bad Boy of Europe.

The lesson to be drawn from all this is that wars are not the work of wicked, aggressive men. In 1939 Europe went to war because of the pressure of German economic expansion—Europe could well go to war again for the same reason, with roughly the same line-up as before—although Hitler the evil is dead, and Adenauer the mild and ruminative is in his place.

One day the people of the world must grasp this fact—that wars flow from the competitive nature of capitalist society—that they are but one of a number of unpleasant by-products of the system of the manufacture of wealth for sale. When that fact has been assimilated and the conflicts of the world are no more ascribed to the malefactions of a handful of rulers, then there will be no more bedtime threats of bogey men for our little boys. Such stratagems will be pointless. The little boys of the world will have grown up.

IVAN.

ABOUT BOOKS

JOHN PETER ALTGELD and Clarence Darrow had much in common. Their lives overlapped and during the latter part of Altgeld's life and the earlier part of Darrow's they were close friends.

Both were lawyers, both were humanitarians. Each wrote books on crime and each defended the early American Trade Unions in the law courts of his day. Each gravitated to an extreme radical outlook during his life, "going over to the left" as it would be called in modern parlance. Each one sacrificed lucrative jobs through his strict adherence to his humanitarian principles, but neither of them scratched below the surface to find the causes of the social problems that stimulated their sympathies. Neither of them came anywhere near to being socialist.

The life of each of these two famous Americans is interestingly portrayed in books by Howard Fast and Irving Stone. In his book, "The American," Mr. Fast gives us a very readable story of the life of John Altgeld from the days when his German farmer father used to stripe him across the buttocks with a leather belt, to the day when he was laid in his coffin for hundreds of thousands of Americans to file past in homage in the pouring rain.

When a boy, Altgeld ran away from his poverty stricken home and joined the army of the northern American states to fight in the civil war. Later he became a school teacher, a barrister, a judge and governor of the state of Illinois.

In the early days of his legal career, Altgeld wrote a book entitled, "Our Penal Machinery and its Victims," which drew down on his head the opprobrium of the American ruling class. In this book he showed that the major portion of crime could be traced to the poverty, slums and lack of opportunity which result from the unequal distribution of wealth in a class society. This book was published in 1884, fifteen years before that internationally famous criminologist, Cesare Lombroso, arrived at the same point of view as Altgeld.

In the days when men like Phil Armour, George Pullman and John D. Rockefeller were piling up their vast fortunes out of the sweat and misery of the American working class, and men like Eugene V. Debs were risking their lives to try to organise the American workers to resist the intense exploitation—in those days Altgeld was driven to the support of "Labour."

When he became governor of Illinois, Altgeld found himself in the embarrassing position that is experienced by all who seek to help the workers by undertaking to manipulate capitalism. The American newspapers vilified him in column and cartoon, presenting him to the people of America as a bloodthirsty ogre trampling on their rights and liberties. President Grover Cleveland moved federal troops into Illinois during the strike of the workers of the Pullman Company. Altgeld was powerless.

He tried to get his nominee elected as president of U.S.A. but failed. He tried to organise an independent political party, a sort of "Labour" party, but failed again.

Apart from all other merits, Mr. Fast's book is to be recommended for its detailed account of the Hay-

market bombing incident of 1886 for which eight prominent working class leaders were "framed," four of them executed and others imprisoned. This affair had international repercussions. Also, Mr. Fast presents us with an insight into the working of the American political elections, a most illuminating insight.

"Darrow for the Defence," the book by Irving Stone, picks up the threads of American history at a date just a few years prior to the death of Altgeld. In it Darrow is presented as a man who would take on any task to help the "under dog" at no matter what cost to himself.

From the day that Clarence Darrow walked out of his job as attorney for the Chicago and North Western Railway to fight for Eugene Debs and the American Railway Union against whom the railway company had obtained an injunction, he became accepted as the man to represent trade unions and other workers' organisations when they were in trouble with the law.

It was a tough job in those days. Murder was committed and trade union officials were charged with the crime; an explosion occurred and a union organiser would be accused; men were bludgeoned into defending themselves and then accused of attacking; a union man was fair game to hang any crime on to and the American press worked up mob hysteria against the accused. Darrow defended brilliantly and with more than frequent success.

He argued that man had not a free will; that a man's actions were the product of his biological make-up worked upon by his social environment. This was the basis of all his arguments whether he was defending a murderer, a thief, a prostitute or union officer. In fact, he did not defend his clients so much as he attacked their prosecutors.

His particular *bête-noire* was capital punishment against which he lectured, wrote and campaigned for many years. He also spent much time and money opposing prohibition and the colour bar. Probably his most sensational case was the Scopes Evolution Case

(Continued overleaf)

NORTH PADDINGTON BY-ELECTION

At the moment of going to Press our campaign in North Paddington is being carried on vigorously. Large indoor meetings are being held, a room in a handy position has been rented from which canvassers go forth, a candidate's address has been printed and circulated, and an Election Special has been printed and is being distributed. All this is making a serious call on our funds and we are still in difficulties. Will all those who wish this campaign to be carried through without putting the Party in financial difficulty send on what cash they can immediately.

at Dayton when he defended the right to teach evolutionary theories in public schools against William Jennings Bryan and his Fundamentalists who were moving to get an Anti-Evolution Law passed in each of the American states.

During his last years Darrow cast a friendly eye at "Russian Communism" whilst talking about a fair capitalism in America. He pleaded the case of the small business man. He died in 1938 at the age of eighty and, as when Altgeld died, thousands queued in the rain to do homage at his coffin.

These two men, Altgeld and Darrow, were admirable, but neither of them has left a mark on the history

THE PASSING SHOW

Musical Comedy

The reformers are never inactive. They don't mind capitalism but dislike its nastier manifestations; and continuously they are at work trying to brighten up some of the smaller murky corners of our society. They are blind to the necessity for the abolition of a system which leads to the slaughter of thousands in Malaya and Indo-China, and of millions in Korea; but they feel that some of the more distasteful incidents of the execution of the handful of wretches who are hanged in Britain every year could well be disposed of. Hence the recent Royal Commission on Capital Punishment. The findings read like an excerpt from some Ruritanian musical comedy.

Condemned cells should be improved and all brought up to the standard of the best. There is room for improvement in the furniture and lighting, though a start has been made. Condemned men should be allowed to listen to the radio, though it may be necessary for them to wear headphones so as not to disturb the other prisoners.—*Daily Herald*, 24/9/53.

As a contribution towards a cure of the ills which beset our society, this has only been excelled by Gilbert and Sullivan. A character in "The Mikado" remarks to another who has been sentenced to death:—

"I heard one day a gentleman say
That criminals who are cut in two
Can hardly feel the fatal steel,
And so are slain without much pain;
If this is true it's jolly for you."

So let our reformers continue their heroic fight for easy chairs in the condemned cell; the concern of Socialists is to sweep the whole ghastly apparatus into the dustbin of history, along with the system of society which makes it necessary.

Lollies

The Bill which has just been introduced into Parliament, with the object of ensuring that our food supplies are kept clean, reminds us that the work of reforming capitalism goes on ceaselessly whichever party is in power. In fact, demands for reforms do not come only from the working class; they come also from the capitalist class, and also from political parties avowedly supporting the capitalist system. Among the capitalists who want "clean food" laws is Mr. Campbell Garratt, who "owns one of the biggest iced-lolly factories in Britain" (*Daily Herald*, 2-11-53). Mr. Garratt sold his last business in 1950 for half a million

of the class from which they sprang and with which they sympathised. They spent their lives rescuing individuals from the morass of capitalist crime and class antagonisms, but left the bog undrained and uncharted for others to wander into. They fought against injustice by taking separate "injustices" and striving to straighten them out—make them just. The cause of all the injustices, the class nature of capitalist society, escaped their attention. The problems they sought to solve were being bred faster than they could eliminate them. We may salute them for their endeavours but we cannot compliment them for their achievements.

W. WATERS.

pounds. If "the rich have been abolished," as some politicians are often heard to claim, one can only remark that this is a lot of money for a poor person to have. With this capital behind him, Mr. Garratt looked round for a new business to enter, and decided on iced lollies. Since manufacturers are responsible in law to consumers if they allow their products to go out in an unhygienic condition, Mr. Garratt built his factory on the lines of a model dairy, and took great care that his lollies should be perfectly clean.

Judge, then, Mr. Garratt's annoyance when he finds rival lolly-manufacturers, who either cannot or will not put as much capital into their ventures, producing their goods under dirty conditions and thus getting, pro rata, equal profits with less capital outlay. He says this:—

Unfortunately it is true that a large proportion of lollies are still made either in dirty conditions or with equipment that could be dangerous. Some of the so-called factories are scandalous. It can only be stopped by strict control—and I think control of the industry's conditions by law is essential.

It was Karl Marx who pointed out that much of the impetus behind reformism in industry comes from the bigger entrepreneurs—Mr. Garratt's annual turnover is £250,000—and much of the opposition to it from the smaller capitalists who cannot (or will not) keep pace with big men in technical improvements.

False or Misleading

The same kind of industrial background has led to the Merchandise Marks Act, 1953, which is aimed at "false or misleading trade descriptions." (*The Times*, 11-11-53.) The principal Act governing this subject was passed in 1887, but it could not deal with the situations created by the appearance of substitute materials and the growth of new methods of advertising. The big industrialist, producing nylon stockings, was unable to invoke the law to prevent his trade being taken by rivals who produced stockings marked "NYLON," in big letters, followed by "-spliced" in very small letters. Nor had the Scotch whisky magnate any remedy when unscrupulous small firms produced a liquid like whisky in bottles with a tartan label. The new Act will protect the big man from this kind of competition.

But while the sponsors of this Act aimed in a general way at truth, they took care that they would fall short of the mark. There is nothing in the Act to prevent claims that "beer is best," or that pills are

"worth a guinea a box"; nor is a breakfast food manufacturer to be prevented from claiming that "a social revolution is sweeping Britain" because some people are eating his patented food for breakfast instead of someone else's.

Manufacturers, it seems, are prepared to accept any stipulation as to accuracy, short of being required to tell the truth.

Russian Capitalism

The speech of Mr. Mikoyan, Soviet Minister of Trade and a Deputy Premier, to managers of trade organisations, directors of large State stores, and shop assistants, on October 17th, contains much valuable evidence as to the nature of the society which exists in the Soviet Union. Mr. Mikoyan said that he was not loath to introduce "foreign methods of organisation and work into Soviet business" (*The Times*, 26-10-53). He remarked that "capitalist trade also had some qualities which should be studied here." Because of competition and difficulties in attracting customers, the capitalists had "developed rather good methods of organising trade." Where such methods were useful Russia "should follow them." Mr. Mikoyan also urged Soviet industry "to develop large-scale advertising to educate and inform the consumer."

Now what would be the use of Russian managers and directors studying "capitalist trade" if the Russian economy were not itself capitalist? The very words Mr. Mikoyan employs underline again and again the capitalist nature of Soviet society. "Trade," "customers," "advertising"—what place could these have in a Socialist society? The very existence of these things pre-supposes the existence of private ownership, or state ownership, of property. Trade is the buying and selling, or exchange, of articles held in private (or state) property. Customers are persons who buy such property; advertising exists to persuade customers to buy more.

Even supposing that one country could on its own organise a Socialist society (which from the nature of the case is impossible), the Russians themselves supply all of us who are not too blind to understand it with plenty of evidence as to the capitalist nature of their society.

Spanish People's Democracy

How do the Stalinists try to persuade us that there is Socialism in Russia? Prominent among the claims they make is that there is some kind of "consultation" between management and workers. Leaving out of the question whether this claim, if it were true, would be any evidence of Socialism, this point arises: Is this kind of thing peculiar to Russia and the other countries which the Stalinists call "Socialist"? The answer is No. Numbers of private businesses in the U.S.A. have discovered that production and profits increase when "consultation" between management and workers is introduced. In Britain during the war, Joint Production Committees were established—and this was when the admittedly capitalist Conservatives held the reins of power. In Western Germany, trade union representatives sit with the management on many boards; but would the Stalinists allege that Adenauer is a Socialist?

And now we get the same thing in Spain. There a decree of the Ministry of Labour has just been published requiring "a council of employer and employed to be set up in all commercial undertakings in Spain employing more than 50 people in any one place of business" (*The Times*, 2-11-53). "The Minister, in a recent broadcast, told Spanish workers that the introduction of the councils was for them a great conquest, which made them participants in their employers' businesses and gave them new responsibilities." So Spanish workers, like the Russian workers, are now to be bamboozled into believing that they own, or "participate" in the ownership of, the industries in which they work. Clearly General Franco is jealous of the increased production which the Russian rulers have been able to drag out of their workers by means of this shabby confidence trick.

Slavery

In the United States of America the use of slave-labour by the Russians is a subject which never fails to touch off the greatest indignation—and rightly so; but slavery in God's own country, all-American slavery, is apparently not considered in the South as such a great crime. Witness the recent case in Kentucky, where two cotton growers were convicted of holding a fellow human-being in slavery on a cotton plantation. The Federal Court of Kentucky thought this over, and imposed its sentence—a fine of 500 dollars each! The amount of the punishment indicates that the two growers had white skins, while their victim was black. What would have been the reaction, from the lynching mob and from the court, if two Negroes had been convicted of holding a white man in slavery!

JOSHUA.

DENISON HOUSE

295 Vauxhall Bridge Road, Victoria, S.W.1.

SUNDAY JANUARY 3rd

7 p.m. prompt

1904 **50** 1954

YEARS OF SOCIALISM

First meeting in series of four

"... the last fifty years"

Speakers: GILMAC, A. TURNER

★

Second meeting on Sunday, February 7th

"An examination of Socialist theory
in the light of modern developments."

CAPITALISM AND THE "OLD CODGERS"

The *Daily Mirror* is not a newspaper that is admired by Socialists but it has a very high circulation and is probably the most popular daily paper in the country. It does not shine on the educational or intellectual field, but it glows with the cheap sensationalism of the crime and sex story. Its particular appeal is reflected in its strip cartoons featuring characters such as "Just Jake" and a young lady called "Jane" she appears each day in a different state of undress. There is little serious reading and it is an excellent reflection of the mass escapism from weighty problems of the twentieth century.

Sometimes, of course, on the more serious side, readers of the *Mirror* are treated to lectures decrying such things as the low moral standards of our times which are written for them by bishops, high churchmen, politicians and others. On the political field it gives critical support to the Labour Party and it follows that it will therefore defend the capitalist system to the best of its ability.

On 27th August the *Daily Mirror* was given a golden opportunity to display itself in its true colours. Its correspondence column, question and answer, is conducted by two gentlemen who style themselves the "Old Codgers"—whether this refers to their actual age or to the sedentary state of their minds, the writer has been unable to discover.

A Mr. Chambers wrote to them from Exeter and asked for the definition of a capitalist. Mr. Chambers stated that he had gathered from his friends that the capitalist is a menace to the working class. The reply by the "Old Codgers" was headed "You can be a Capitalist" and Mr. Chambers was informed that his friends were "on the left of the Socialist Movement." This is a very necessary safeguard for the "Old Codgers" to take since their employers at the moment support the Labour Party, which wrongly calls itself Socialist and does not, of course, attack Capitalism. If they divide "Socialists" into "left" and "right" then the difficulty is solved and the circulation of the *Daily Mirror* amongst Labour Party supporters is not endangered.

We are then informed that "there's a lot of nonsense talked about capitalists" and the writers in the next two paragraphs proceed to demonstrate the validity of this statement in no uncertain manner. We are told: "Now, capital is best defined as that part of wealth which is saved in order to assist future production. A man—any man—creates capital so soon as he produces more than he consumes. And a man with capital is a capitalist."

We are shaken by this naive definition of capital—"that part of wealth which is saved to assist future production." This statement, which is open to any number of interpretations, first prompts us to ask the question—Who is it that is in a position to "save" in order to "assist" future production?

The answer will take us away from the fanciful argument of the "Old Codgers" and into the real world of material wealth and the way it is divided.

The Labour Research Department in a pamphlet entitled "Britain's Wealth and Profits" pointed out

that for the last 90 years wage earners, who are in the majority, received only about 40 per cent of the national income. The bulk of property is owned by a tiny section of the population. The matter was summed up by Langley, Oxford Institute Bulletin of Statistics, in December 1950 as follows:—

"One per cent. of the persons aged 25 and over in England and Wales owned 50 per cent. of the total capital in 1946-7. Ten per cent. of the total number of persons aged 25 and over owned 80 per cent. of the total capital in this period while 61 per cent. of the adult population owned 5 per cent. of the total capital in 1946-7."

Surely the "Old Codgers" cannot ask their readers to believe that this vast inequality is explained by the fact that the rich minority have "saved" and the poor majority have not? The differences are far too vast to make this feasible and the division of 40 per cent. of the national income amongst the millions of wage earners makes saving to any large extent a virtual impossibility. It is obvious that a man is only able to amass a large amount of wealth "to save to assist future production" if he happens to be a member of that small group that already owns the lion's share of the property.

The Socialist explanation is that modern society is divided into two classes which obtain their livings in different ways. The majority are members of the working class who, because they are divorced from ownership of the means of production, have to work for wages or salaries for those that own the land, factories, mines, machines and workshops. On the other hand, the owning class, that 10 per cent. of the population that own 80 per cent. of the total capital, are enabled to live without working on the income from their investments.

Capital, therefore, is wealth which is invested for the purpose of making profit. It may take the form of land, factories, mines, machines, workshops, raw materials or monies laid aside to pay wages or salaries and it is the private property of one or a group of individuals. The men and women who own sufficient to enable them to live from their investments can only therefore be defined as capitalists. It is clear that two classes exist and this is the only logical dividing line.

This, we feel, shows that the definition of capital given by the "Old Codgers" is an impossible one, and reduces it to a meaningless term. But we must follow them in the rest of their reply to their correspondent if only to see the absurd position into which their definition of a capitalist leads them.

"Suppose you are earning, we'll say, £8 a week. And you spend on your home and selves £6 per week. You have £2 left which you put in a bank or the Savings Bank. At the end of a year you've £100 saved. Now that is capital and you are in fact a capitalist."

Well, this is a very comforting thought. All of those workers who have small bank or savings bank accounts are capitalists. This, however, does not change their social position they are still forced to work for someone else in order to live and in times of illness or crises the small banking account is soon eaten up. The term capitalist, we repeat, can only define a class, and the worker with £100 or more in the bank does

not for this reason change his class or his manner of life.

It is very presumptuous for the "Old Codgers" to suggest that the average family man can save £2 a week. It is even more ridiculous for them to suggest that the presumed savings of £2 (plus the generous interest of a post office savings account) takes one into the wealthy capitalist class. Sir John Ellerman, who has interests in the *Daily Mirror* is worth well over £40,000,000, yet he is still a comparatively young man! According to the reasoning of the "Old Codgers," therefore, it would take 400,000 years saving £100 a year in the manner suggested by them to get into this position!

The best as always is yet to come and the writers conclude with the following pearls of wisdom:—"You are a capitalist," they say,

"Because you have produced more than you have consumed; and the bank is lending your £100, at interest, to assist firms in future production. Multiply yourself by a million or other savers and their £100 a year or more and you realise how capital finds the money for firms to buy machinery, or the material to manufacture goods—before they receive payment for the goods."

We were under the impression that this argument had collapsed long ago with the weight of its absurdity. As well as the information given above it has been stated by no less a person than Mr. R. A. Butler on 21st October, 1952, that 40 per cent. of dividends go to people with over £2,000 per year. Ten per cent. goes to life insurance companies or bankers and the remaining half to other shareholders. There are about 1½ million shareholders and there are 235,000 people with incomes over £2,000; this means that there are something over one million with incomes below £2,000 who receive dividends (Labour Research Department—"Britain's Wealth and Profits").

The distribution of dividends amongst even that small proportion of the population who are share-

holders leaves no doubt whatsoever that wealth is concentrated in a very few hands. It is clear in the light of these facts that the "savers" with their "£100 a year or more" multiplied by a "million or so," whether they exist in reality or merely in the imagination of the "Old Codgers" can play no real part in the ownership of industry. Most certainly "Capital" has much stronger and more stable financial forces to rely on "to find the money to buy machinery, or the material to manufacture goods."

On one point only the writers appear to be somewhat nearer the truth; this is quite accidental and it is when they speak of people producing more than they consume. Again it is a rather loose phrase but in one sense it can be used to reveal the basic nature of capitalist society.

The working class always produces more wealth than it consumes. A wage or salary earner receives just about sufficient to enable him to consume enough of the means of life to exist on for a week or month. He produces, of course, much more than this, a far greater amount of wealth than the value of his wages, and the surplus value he produces becomes the unearned income of the capitalist class.

The *Daily Mirror* cannot of course be expected to report "legalised robbery" in its crime pages. The true facts must at all times and places be hidden from its readers, if this is not done, the working class will soon become aware that they cannot become capitalists and that there is no future for humanity within the framework of modern society.

However, this newspaper and the rest of the popular press cannot hide the facts forever and the day will come when the workers will no longer support the social system that they uphold. Then neither "Live Letters," "The Old Codgers" or even "Jane" will stop the temperature in the circulation room falling to freezing point.

D.M.

PARTY NEWS BRIEFS

A series of meetings, marking the Fiftieth Anniversary of the formation of the Party are being organised by Paddington Branch. These meetings are to be held at Denison House, Vauxhall Bridge Road, and full details are given elsewhere in this issue, and later meetings will be advertised in the January issue.

Paddington Branch has started a drive to increase SOCIALIST STANDARD sales. In addition to being canvassed from door to door in Paddington, this journal is now available from the following newsagents:— G. Bischoff, 290, Harrow Road; C. Gates, 115, Harrow Road; R. Harris, 264a, Edgware Road; G. R. Hill, 476, Harrow Road; P. H. Payne, 746, Harrow Road; F. Stayne, 366, Harrow Road; A. G. Taylor, 8, Harrow Road.

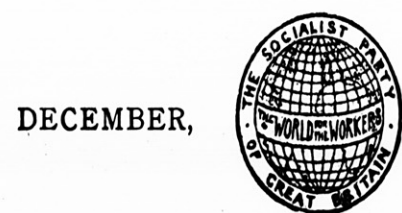
Those in the area who may be reading the SOCIALIST STANDARD for the first time are cordially invited to come along to the Branch Room, at the Portman Arms, 422, Edgware Road, any Wednesday. The room is large and comfortable, and the members are always pleased to discuss informally with visitors any matter connected with Party activity.

Several meetings and debates are advertised elsewhere in this issue, so please make a note of any that are convenient for you to attend and give them your support. Glasgow Branches are organising a Socialist Challenge meeting at St. Andrew's Hall on Sunday, 17th January, 1954. A notice will be in the January SOCIALIST STANDARD, but the branches (Kelvingrove and City) are anxious that the meeting should be a success and are giving ample notice of it by the details shown in this issue.

Internal Party Journal. Members and sympathisers are reminded that the Party publishes an internal journal, FORUM (monthly, 6d.). Those who are unable to obtain copies through their branch may order them by post from the Literature Secretary at Head Office (6 months 3s. 9d., 12 months 7s. 6d.). Bound copies of the first 15 issues (October 1952—December 1953, including index) are now available, price 7s. 6d., postage 3d. extra, but supplies are extremely limited; at the time of going to press, less than two dozen more orders could be fulfilled. Separate back numbers can still be obtained from Head Office, except the first (October 1952) issue.

P.H.

THE SOCIALIST STANDARD



DECEMBER,

1953

OFFICIAL NOTICE

Correspondence for the Executive Committee and articles for *The Socialist Standard* should be sent to the S.P.G.B., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4, London; 'phone: MAC 3811. Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.; Tuesday, 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. Orders for literature to the Literature Secretary. Letters containing postal orders, etc., should be sent to E. LAKE, S.P.G.B., at the above address. P.O.'s, cheques, etc., should be crossed and made payable to the S.P.G.B.

The Executive Committee meets every Tuesday at 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4 (Head Office), at 7.30 p.m.

CAPITALISM'S HUNDRED VOICES

Governments in all lands and in all ages have given much time, thought and money to the task of persuading the citizenry at home that they are fortunate to be living in that particular country under the rule of that particular set of public benefactors. But never until now have so many people in so many lands been engaged in informing the "foreigner" that he is outside Paradise. From hundreds of radio transmitters in scores of languages and at a cost of many tens of millions of pounds a year these contradictory claims are coo'd, bawled, crooned and sung across the ether. Then there are the propaganda films, the information services, the translated books, the journals in foreign languages, the lectures, the hospitality to foreign visitors, the scholarships for foreign students, all with the same design of showing, by careful selection of the pleasant and suppression of the obnoxious, that there is no place like X—, no people like its inhabitants and no social system equal to theirs.

It is in many ways a peculiar business. It is for export only, since the highly glamorized picture of life in X— that is calculated to impress the rest of the world might astonish the people who actually live there. Apart from some aid to the tourist trade it pays no direct dividends in return for its huge costs. It is an industry that so far has never had a set-back. Some industries decline in war and trade depression but not this one. At those times each Government is more anxious than ever to show that all is well at home, however bad it may be elsewhere.

The printed propaganda is in some ways the most revealing because it is possible to collect specimens from all parts of the world and set them side by side.

Here you see what the photographers, the display artists, the journalists, and colour printers can do with their material when expense is of no account—invariably these costly products are given away, not charged for. But you also see how little the raw material matters in relation to the finished product. You may not think much of that new gasometer that overhangs your neighbourhood, or the factory chimneys that belch "smog," or the coal mine where you work or the canteen where you eat, but just wait until you see how the publicity experts can put it over in warm colours on expensive paper. Of course there is a sameness about all these publications; apparently those responsible have all been trained in the same capitalist school of advertising. In all the countries in the world the sun always shines, the children are always clean and chubby, the streets are swept and tidy, the houses are all new, the shops are filled with well-dressed customers, there is always a seat on the tube, there are no employment exchanges, mothers always smile happily, all women are beautiful and all men are tough and glowing with health. All the works of nature and of man in X— are the best, biggest and most beautiful in the world and above all everyone is captivatingly happy.

So much for description of this universal governmental propaganda; but what of its purpose and results. The purpose is to enhance the prestige of the ruling group in the country of issue, and to counter the propaganda of all foreign groups, including of course that of overweening allies. In time of war or "cold war" the propaganda becomes active instigation to revolt and disaffection in enemy countries. How much effect it has is not easy to say but certainly lots of it has no effect at all because it goes unheard or unread. Much of the printed matter is sent to official bodies, to political and trade union organisations, prominent business men, politicians, and newspapers and journals. If read at all it will be taken with large grains of salt—you can't catch many advertising men with other people's advertisements. But some of it does eventually reach the masses for whom it is intended, even if only in the form of the reproduction of extracts, and there are now workers in every country in the world who believe that things are ordered differently and better somewhere else. There is a partial corrective to this, for the success of the propaganda does encourage more people to go abroad to see for themselves, or at least to become more interested in getting information about foreign countries. To the extent that this happens there will be more people who realise that the evils of capitalism are universal and who will increasingly reject all the propaganda to the contrary put out by all the governments.

The whole business of persuading the foreigner has an encouraging aspect for socialists for it shows how uneasy and on the defensive all the rulers are. Each capitalist group is afraid that its hold on its own workers is so tenuous that foreign propaganda will succeed in undermining it and must therefore be countered. None of them are content to let experience speak for itself, each must try to glorify life at home and belittle life in foreign countries.

It shows how little attraction life in this capitalist age has for the workers. In all countries the existing

social system is capitalism, with varying degrees of private or State capitalism to differentiate one country from another; but nowhere do we find these government propagandists openly preaching and praising capitalism. They daren't, for capitalism now has such a bad name. Instead they dress it up under all sorts of disguises:—the Welfare State, Soviet Socialism, People's Democracies, The American Way of Life, Co-operative Democracy, Workers Self-Management, etc., etc. The latest entrant in this hocus-pocus race is the Argentine, which officially informs English readers of an illustrated

booklet called "The Emancipation of the Workers" that they are on their way to "the Syndicalist State" based on the doctrine of "Justicialism." Spain's General Franco is running a line in overseas propaganda very like that from Argentina's Peron.

If we may offer a word of guidance to workers in all countries in assessing the merits of the foreign governmental propaganda to which they are subjected it is that they should remember that in all its varied tongues this propaganda all comes from the same tainted source, it is all the voice of capitalism.

BACKWATERS OF HISTORY—3

The German Spartacists

SHE was born on March 5th, 1871, of comparatively well-to-do parents in the poverty-stricken little Polish town of Zamosc in the Lublin district, not far from the Russian frontier. Her Jewish parents were in the timber trade and afforded her and their other four children an education above the average, despite the hostility to Jews in the Warsaw schools which they attended.

He was born on August 13th in the same year in Germany. His father, a close associate of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels and a prominent member of the German Social Democratic Party, was for many years a member of the Reichstag. He spent his early life as a law student before he, too, became a prominent member of the German Social Democratic Party.

These two, Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, were driven close together during the 1914-1918 war. Both had a hectic political career, she in Poland, Russia and Germany, and he mainly in Germany. Their opposition to the war caused them both to serve frequent and lengthy periods of imprisonment.

In 1914, that organisation of national so-called Socialist parties, known as The Second International, fell to pieces. Each of the parties that comprised it threw aside its talk of international fraternity of the working class and lined up with its own capitalist class in the prosecution of the war, urging its members to take up arms against their fellow workers in other lands. The German Social Democratic Party was no exception. Karl Liebknecht, under pressure of party discipline, together with other Social Democratic members of the Reichstag, voted for war credits. But, only once. Thereafter he consistently opposed the prosecution of the war, often being the only one in the Reichstag to do so. The English and French capitalist press applauded him, the German capitalists imprisoned him.

As the war continued and the pressure on the German workers became heavier, Liebknecht received more and more support. The German Social Democratic Party split. On January 1st, 1916, at a meeting in Liebknecht's house, a programme drawn up by Rosa Luxemburg, was accepted and published under the nom-de-plume of Junius. It was further decided to publish a clandestine journal entitled "Spartacus" and the group became known as the "Spartacus League," until January 1st, 1919, when it became the Communist Party of Germany.

Another group, led by Kautsky and Haase, broke

away from the Social Democratic Party after a conference at Gotha in early 1917. This group, unwilling to line up with the Spartacists, formed itself into the German Independent Social Democratic Party. It was approximately parallel to the British Independent Labour Party and, like the Spartacists, opposed the continuation of the war.

By September 1918 it became apparent to the German military high command that the war was lost. General Ludendorff resigned and President Hindenburg wrote to the chancellor, Prince Max of Baden, demanding that the government should accept the responsibility of asking the allied powers for an armistice. A new cabinet was appointed, but the German workers were too war weary to be impressed.

The sailors at the Kiel naval base mutinied, took over the fleet and set up committees with the dockyard workers on November 4th. By November 7th the rising had spread to Hamburg and Munich, army reservists joining with the factory workers. On November 9th a general strike occurred in Berlin and the soldiers of the garrison elected representatives to attend the committees set up by the workers. On the same day, Ebert, a Social Democrat, was made chancellor and the Berlin workers and soldiers, at a giant meeting, elected a government called the Council of the Representatives of the People. It consisted of three members of the main Social Democratic Party and three of the Independents.

The Council of the Representatives of the People introduced legislation for an eight hour day, extension of the franchise, re-instatement of demobilised soldiers, participation of trade unions in wage agreements and the constitution of new legislative bodies. But capitalism remained unchallenged and the army facing the Russian border was left under the command of the old General Staff.

The Spartacists tried to carry the rising to further limits. They organised large demonstrations and armed conflict broke out all over Germany between workers and the state and municipal authorities. The Independents withdrew from the Council of People's Representatives and the majority group of Social Democrats had the government to themselves.

The soldiers who were being disbanded from the war areas were re-enlisted into detachments for "frontier defence" and picked and trusted men and officers were organised into "Free Corps" and trained

for street fighting. They were still under the orders of the war-time officers and were still paid from the army funds.

The Spartacus League was a small organisation consisting of tiny autonomous groups scattered all over Germany. On November 18th it published a newspaper called Rote Fahne (Red Flag) with Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg as editors and with Paul Levi, August Thalheimer, Paul Lange, Hermann Dunker, Wilhelm Pieck and Leo Jogiches in support. In this paper the aims of the Spartacists were published. Rosa Luxemburg wrote:—

"The abolition of capitalist rule and the creation of a socialist order of society—this and nothing else is the historical theme of the German Revolution. It is a tremendous task and it cannot be performed overnight with a few decrees from above, but only by the conscious action of the toiling masses in town and country, and by the highest degree of intellectual maturity and idealism on the part of those masses pursuing their aim through all vicissitudes until final victory."—"Rosa Luxemburg," by Paul Frolich. Gollancz.

The Spartacists further demand:

1. The disarming of the police force.
 2. The seizure of all arms and ammunition by the workers committees.
 3. The arming of the entire male population as a workers militia.
 4. Election of all officers from the rank and file.
 5. A revolutionary tribunal to try those responsible for the war.
 6. A united German Socialist Republic, abolishing the separate states.
 7. Election of workers' councils all over Germany with the right of recall of the representatives at any time.
 8. Abolition of all class distinctions and legal equality of the sexes.
 9. A six hour working day.
 10. Confiscation of all crown estates and revenue for the benefit of the people.
 11. Annulment of state debts.
 12. Confiscation of all land and other property exceeding an amount to be fixed by the people's councils.
 13. Establishment of administrative councils in all industries and of a General Strike Committee to work in conjunction with the workers' political party.
 14. Connection with workers' organisations abroad to establish an international brotherhood.
- (Condensed from "The Aims and Objects of the German Spartacists," published in English by the British Socialist Party, 1919.)

Huge demonstrations organised by both sides, the Democratic Party and the Spartacists, took place during December, 1918. The Democratic authorities issued posters calling:

"Workers! Citizens!

Our Fatherland is threatened with destruction. Save it. It is no longer threatened from without, but from within. Spartacus threatens to kill it. Kill their leaders. Kill Liebknecht. When they are dead you will have peace, land and bread. Soldiers from the front."—"Rosa Luxemburg," by Paul Frolich. Gollancz.)

In January 1919 the government ordered the dismissal of all Independent Social Democrats from posts of authority, including Eichhorn, Berlin chief of police. Eichhorn refused to resign and, although his own Independent party did not support him, the Spartacists did. They occupied police headquarters and the offices of a number of capitalists' newspapers on Sunday, January 5th. Armed workers, supporting the Spartacists, marched into railway stations, food warehouses, the Royal stables, the Chancellery, and other large buildings. The Spartacists issued a call for the overthrow of the government and the setting up of a workers' republic.

The government set to work and appointed Noske as Governor-General of Berlin with extraordinary powers. He called in the "Free Corps" and the Spartacists and their followers were soon dislodged from their buildings, and driven into their homes where they were relentlessly pursued. Most of the leaders were caught and imprisoned and many workers were killed. Liebknecht and Luxemburg escaped but on January 15th they were taken at their hiding place in 53, Mannheimer Strasse in Wilmsdorf by a group of soldiers.

They were taken to the Eden Hotel for questioning. When being taken from this building Liebknecht was struck on the head with a rifle butt, bundled into a car by a Captain Horst von Pflugk-Hartung, driven away and shot in the back by this officer. His body was taken to a mortuary and delivered as an unknown man found dead in the Tiergarten.

When Rosa Luxemburg came out of the Eden Hotel she was also struck on the head with a rifle butt by a soldier named Runge, who smashed her skull with two blows. A Lieutenant Vogel put her body in a car and later threw it into the Landwehr Canal, from which it was not recovered until the following May.

Thus ended the attempt by the Spartacist League to emulate the Bolshevik seizure of power of October, 1917.

Frederick Engels in his preface to Karl Marx's "Class Struggles in France" wrote these words 25 years before the Spartacist rising:—

"Even in the classic time of street fighting, therefore, the barricade produced more of a moral than a material effect. It was a means of shaking the steadfastness of the military. If it held out until this was attained, then victory was won; if not, there was defeat."

"But since then there have been very many more changes, and all in favour of the military. If the big towns have become considerably bigger, the armies have become bigger still."

"On the other hand, all the conditions on the insurgents' side have grown worse. An insurrection with which all sections of the people sympathise will hardly recur. . . ."

"And, finally, since 1848 the newly built quarters of the big towns have been laid out in long, straight, broad streets, as though made to give full effect to the new cannons and rifles. The revolutionary would have to be mad, who himself chose the working class districts in the North and East of Berlin for a barricade fight."

It is a pity the Spartacists did not give heed to Engels words. Many lives could have been saved to continue the struggle in more useful fields. Even had the insurrection been successful it could only have resulted in the Spartacists governing a capitalist Germany. The majority of German workers had no understanding of socialism and as little inclination for social revolutionary change. The Spartacists would have been in the same position as the Russian Bolsheviks—governing by force and terror—forced into administering capitalism.

Books to read:—

- "The Growth of Modern Germany" by Roy Pascal.
- "A People's History of Germany" by A. Ramos Oliveira.
- "Rosa Luxemburg" by Paul Frolich.
- "Hammer or Anvil" by Evelyn Anderson.
- "The Birth of the German Republic" by Arthur Rosenberg.
- "The German Spartacists, Their Aims and Objects" published by the B.S.P.

W. WATERS.

WHO WILL DO THE DIRTY WORK?

ONE of the common questions put to the Socialist, and a question that troubles many who are sympathetic to Socialism, is "Who will do the dirty work under Socialism"; that is who will be coalminers, sewer-men, dustmen and the like. The question is based upon the assumptions that there is work that is dirty, that this work will always have to be done in the way it is done today, and that it is only done today because the doers of it are forced to do it in order to get a living.

Before answering the question let us look at the subject a little closer. First of all let us see if we can define what is meant by dirty work.

Is it handling dirt? A doctor and a sanitary engineer handle a considerable amount of dirt with the object of preventing the spread of disease—so does a sewerman, a dustman and a sweeper. Think of the work doctors and nurses do not only at home but in plague and disease-ridden areas, the horrible conditions in which they have to work and the horrible work they have to do. Yet no one suggests that a doctor does dirty work but most people are convinced that the sewerman, the dustman and the sweeper does dirty work. Why?

Is dirty work that which makes a man dirty? A motor engineer gets dirty with the object of ensuring the smooth running of machinery—so does a stoker in the bowels of a ship. Yet whilst no one suggests the one is doing dirty work they accept that the other is. Why?

Is dirty work working amongst foul smelling material? A chemist does so with the object of improving the quality of food—so does a fish curer. Yet the latter is doing dirty work and the former is not. Why?

Is it the nature of the work itself that makes it dirty work? A bacteriologist works among decayed food with the object of improving hygiene—so does a dishwasher in a restaurant. Yet again one is dirty work whilst the other is not. Why?

Is work that injures your fellow men that which is dirty? If that were true just think who would come under it! Soldiers, producers of poison gas, munition workers, producers of atom bombs, politicians, monopolists (including Governments), lawyers who defend the predatory, financiers, advertisers who take in the innocent, those who tell fairy tales about heaven and hell and tell children they must believe them or be damned for all eternity, and hosts of others who immerse themselves in the dirt of Capitalism. Yet who but the socialist would claim that these people are doing dirty work? Why?

Fine gentlemen and dainty ladies move happily amidst the odours and the manure of racing stables without any feeling that they are doing dirty work, but they would be astonished at the suggestion that it was not dirty work to shift that manure. Why?

An airman risks his life and gets covered in oil and grease breaking a record and he is treated as a hero. A coalminer risks his life and gets covered in coaldust bringing coal to the surface for the good of mankind and he is treated as doing dirty work! Why?

Now that we have cleared the ground a bit let us answer the "Whys?"

"Dirty work" has nothing to do with the work itself or the dirtiness thereof. A man will shift manure on to his garden and his friends will look on admiringly and proffer advice; but if he shifts manure for a living it is quite a different matter. It is not just "menial" work for what is more menial than the politician kissing babies and smirking at their mother, the shopkeeper fawning on his customers, the financier kow-towing to the lenders of money, or the clergyman accepting a tip at a funeral? No! Generally speaking the work that is looked upon as "dirty work" is that which is laborious, ill-paid, offers no opportunities for the ambitious, and provides the only opening the less fortunate can find of earning a living. People of all kinds of social status willingly do the same kind of work when the aim is satisfaction, pleasure or prestige; it only becomes dirty when it has to be done for no other end than gaining a living. The term is tied up with wage slavery and those that perform this work are by that fact branded as lower than their fellows. In other words dirty work is solely a product of Capitalism because it leaves the worker where he is, tied to the tread mill of monotonous labour with faint hope of relief. The phrase has only a disparaging social significance; a significance that at one time in the past applied to all forms of labour. Thus with the passing of wage-slavery the phrase will have no meaning.

We can now answer the question by placing it in its proper perspective in the light of the foregoing remarks.

Under Socialism no work that is necessary for the good of mankind will come under the heading of dirty work. People will do it as wholeheartedly as doctors and nurses work today in battle and plague-stricken areas. When industrial areas, cities and swamps have been cleared; when people can live wholesome and healthy lives with plenty of fresh clean air; when the rush and tear of life has departed, then most of what is regarded as dirty today will have disappeared. Quite apart from this, when all the people stand upon an equal footing towards each other the snobbery that attaches a label of nastiness to some forms of human activity will disappear; no one will be afraid of his neighbour

SOCIALIST CHALLENGE

Public Meeting

ST. ANDREWS HALLS (MID HALL)

Berkeley Street, Glasgow

SUNDAY, 17th January, 1954, at 7 p.m.

We have invited representatives of the Glasgow (Kelvingrove) Divisional Labour Party to take the platform to state their case in opposition to the Socialist Party of Great Britain.

Socialist Party Speaker - - T. A. MULHERON.

looking with scorn upon the work he is doing. Finally nobody objects to doing work that is dirty when he knows that it is necessary in order to obtain some desirable end, that he can clean himself afterwards, that he is not bound to do it all his working days, and that

no stigma attaches to it.

The answer to the question then is a simple one. Under Socialism everyone will take part in all the necessary social work and no one will worry a bit.

GILMAC.

WHAT IS RELIGION?—(continued)

The Inspired Books

MOST religions have their literature which is their source of all knowledge and wisdom, and their declaration of principles. The claim is always the same that this inspired book, work, or collection of writings, is holy, immaculate, infallible, beyond reproach, and the only truth—in fact it is God's word. Naturally the followers of one book will tell you that all the other books claiming to be inspired are quite false.

The book with which we are mostly concerned is the Bible, and although written between 1700 and 2700 years ago, this antiquated book of the dead has still a profound influence upon the living, as those who have had occasion to go to court know, and many who wanted a divorce have experienced, apart from the role it plays in general education of children, references in the press and on the radio, and its effects upon society. No Bible, then no Jesus, no miracles, no after life, no prayers, and all the rest of it. Our present ideas of Christianity spring from the Bible. If that is not the word of God, if it is not infallible, if it is not perfect and free from contradiction, then its value is limited as with other books, and this means that it could not have been inspired. We shall deal with the Bible in more detail in another article.

Other religions have similar books or writings. The Mohammedans have their Koran which according to Mohammed was given to him already completed and perfect, by an angel who swooped down from the clouds while Mohammed was strolling in his garden. There is the Zend Avesta of Zoroastrianism, the Vedas of the Hindus, the classical writings of Confucius may also be included, and many of the lesser religions have their Bibles.

None of these books can have any claim to have been written by a god or gods. All of them are clearly the writings of uninspired men, and all of them are full of contradictions, errors, absurdities, and the accepted ideas of the times in which they were written. Surely we are entitled to expect that inspired writings should contain ideas at least a little in advance of their time.

As many of the ruling class (as well as many of the working class) accept in the nominal Christian countries the Bible, we ought to examine it carefully, and if it is holy, wonderful, immaculate, and infallible we shall not fail to discover it. If on the other hand we find that it is full of mistakes, and contradictions, then the whole of the Christian fabric which is built upon the Bible as its premises, is like a house built on sand.

In the pamphlet "Socialism and Religion" published by the Party in 1911, and reprinted in 1925 and for many years now out of print, on page nine we find, "The fundamental idea of religion is a belief in the persistence of life after death." It is true that belief

in life after death does constitute one of the fundamentals of religion, but not the only one.

Man does not want to die, not even members of the working class with all the privations to which they are subjected. As far as we know primitive man did not want to die, save in exceptional circumstances. When primitive man dreamt that his lost companions were still living, as far as he could ascertain, for he saw them again, spoke to them again, hunted and fished with them once more (in his dreams that was—but he did not know he was dreaming). What more natural thing was it for him to assume than that he had another life, another self, somewhere else "on the astral plane, or in the third dimension," as some crack-pots would say. It was always a question of mystery of death and of dreams, and naturally he linked them together. Ghosts were everywhere, nightmares were a regular occurrence and most disturbing. The anger of gods was being constantly aroused, religion was in the making in an environment full of superstition and ignorance.

Why then is it that so many people believe in life after death in these days, when we have learnt so much about the origin of religion? We might as well answer that we have learnt a lot about capitalism, but millions are still deluded by it. Those who accept the "after-life belief" today, whether in the ancient Christian form, or the more modern spiritualists' form of survival, do so because of their explicit belief in the Bible and the existence of God or gods which dominate nature and rule the universe. All our earlier knowledge of survival if it can so be called knowledge, came from the Bible direct, except that which was disseminated by priests who in their turn got it from the Bible. Therefore if we want to follow the matter to its logical conclusion we must consider this profoundly important book from which arises the ideas of life after death.

PUBLIC DEBATE

"SHOULD SOCIALISTS SUPPORT WORLD GOVERNMENT?"

YES:— Crusade for World Government

Speaker: Winifred Watson

NO:— Socialist Party of Great Britain

Speaker: H. Read

EALING TOWN HALL,

(2 minutes from Ealing Broadway Station)

THURSDAY, 10th DECEMBER, at 8 p.m.

ADMISSION FREE

ALL WELCOME

The Bible certainly promises life after death, in several places, in fact that is the purpose of believing and the reward for believing. The Bible also tells us that it is "all up" with the grave. Ecclesiastes Ch. 9 verse 5 for instance "For the living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten." This reads strangely alongside the many better known verses such as "He that believeth and is

baptised shall be saved; He that believeth not shall be damned." The latter offers both a reward for believing and a punishment for not believing, so you can take your choice, but don't say you have not been warned! We shall deal with the Bible in more detail later on, meanwhile most of us living under capitalism find it hard enough to survive before death, leave alone afterwards.

H. JARVIS.

HUMAN NATURE

SINCE the time when man ceased to be so completely a victim of his environment and first began to use tools, his thinking has been mainly to do with hunting, fishing, sowing, reaping and weaving, and the religious rites and taboos which grew up around those activities. From what we know of our progenitors and their primitive appliances they must have had a hard job making ends meet. Unlike us living in 1953, who have reached that stage in man's fascinating story where sufficient control over nature has been achieved to make non-existent the possibility of race extinction by one of nature's catastrophes, the minds of our more ancient forbears were wholly absorbed by the struggle for existence. For them, it was not possible to store food for the day of famine by refrigeration; speedily transport food from one part of the globe to another; move quickly out of the path of floods of water or lava; or make habitable deserts of sand or ice. This concentration on the struggle for existence, still, though in a different way, the lot of the majority of people, would account for man's lack of knowledge of himself.

Most of us have a general idea of our history, of what man did in different places at different times, but few of us know why man acted as he did, or what man is. This statement really is an extraordinary one. Men do not know themselves!!! That this is a fact could be demonstrated by quoting what some men have said about other men. When governments all over the world talk about the people whom they themselves govern they usually describe them as being peace-loving, industrious, intelligent, brave and great. When speaking of the subjects of the government to whom they happen to be opposed they describe them as being warlike, greedy, lazy, stupid, treacherous and inglorious. When different governments for reasons of policy decide to be allies all the nasty things which were said in the past are forgotten and their respective peoples are suddenly discovered to have the exact same virtuous characteristics. During the 1939-45 war the American, Russian, British and French governments were united in denouncing the Germans, Italians and Japanese as being war-loving, cruel, greedy and fiendish, while they themselves were the defenders of democracy and civilisation, overwhelmingly possessed of a love of humanity.

The war ended and the squabbles over the division of the spoil commenced, and within a short time some of the allies lost their glorious virtues. The Russian Bear must have caught a contagion when tearing the German carcass, because he began to display the evil diseases of militarism and barbarity. Somehow or another the Americans, British and French were

infected too, perhaps also from the unburied German corpse, for the Russians now discovered that their former friends were just a rotten lot of decadent capitalist nations, keeping the toiling slaves of the West from liberation. Stranger still, the Germans, who were supposed to have been the cause of all the trouble, became virtuous once more—depending on whether they happened to be living in the Eastern or Western controlled sections of Germany.

Then there are the less spectacular views of humans on humans. We are asked to believe as an incontrovertible fact that red-headed Irishmen are great pugilists; that Jews and Scotchmen are very mean; that Englishmen are highly civilised; that Negroes are stupid; and Orientals extremely wise. Apart from all this, we are also very often informed from unimpeachable authorities that all men are naturally lazy, greedy, jealous and licentious.

When all the rubbish generally spoken or written about human nature, whether by pompous elder statesmen, infallible pope, Tom, Dick or Harry, is examined critically, we realise how ignorant human beings are of human beings. Let us therefore try to find out what is generally meant when people use the words "human nature," and whether the assumptions upon which the use of the words are based are true or false. Having gone so far we might be able to see that the so-called human nature arguments against the Socialist case are not valid objections. It must be admitted that when people who have not given a great deal of time to thinking about the matter use the words "human nature" and are questioned about what they mean they are usually very vague. It will be shown that those who are more verbose in explaining their meaning have given very little time to watching human beings.

We Socialists say that, given different working conditions, men will do their best and fully enjoy what they are doing in the knowledge that they are working for their own benefit and for the benefit of all human beings. We say that the productive activity under Socialism will be a willing activity. There will be no bosses or foremen to force us to get on with the job. The usual "human-nature" argument against this is that men are naturally lazy, and therefore, if they have no one to force them to work no work will be done. When the human-nature experts are asked for evidence they tell us all about the men and women who immediately the foreman's back is turned stop work. They also tell us of the many people they know who would not work if it could be avoided. They usually say this in a condemnatory way, giving a tinge of immorality to those fortunates who are supposed to be

able to live without having to work, and of course, always mean someone other than themselves.

What the human nature experts do is to isolate the instances which they describe and which are generally factual in a capitalist world and apply them to all human beings for all time, past, present and future. They ignore the other instances of where, even in capitalist society with its tendency to deaden the social instincts, some workers actually believe that their jobs are good and proper and socially useful and therefore give of their best without continuous compulsion. They ignore the existence of people who apply themselves to their work in the belief that it is in the interests of the people of Britain to be more productive and less wasteful on low wages in order to capture the export markets. They ignore the doctors, nurses and civilians who occasionally give unremittingly of their energies when some disaster like the train crash at Harrow, the Lynmouth floods, or a mine explosion occurs. They forget the patriot soldier who is prepared to give his life because he believes that by so doing he will help to protect the lives of others. When instancing the mythical people who would do absolutely nothing without compulsion there is no mention of the very tangible evidence of people working very hard indeed when given the opportunity of resting from their enforced labour. Harold Clay, President of the Workers' Educational Association, recently wrote an article in "Labour," the T.U.C. magazine and this is what he had to say. "In the most recent year for which we have figures—1952—the W.E.A. achieved the highest number of tutorial classes it has ever had running at one time. There were 2,380 classes running in which 38,000 men and women were undertaking systematised study, involving regular reading and written work in subjects that would help them to develop their own personalities and become more understanding and responsible members of our community." (This is the most significant part) "There was no compulsion and no promise of rewards, such as better jobs or promotion prospects, to bring those 38,000 men and women to their studies. Nor am I going to write off as unworthy of the W.E.A. all the remaining 3,400 odd shorter courses provided in that year with their 60,000 students." There we have only one instance of nearly 100,000 men and women doing something, remembering the words of Mr. Clay, without compulsion or promise of reward. Add to this all the thousands of people who attend evening classes for one reason or another, and the millions more who engage in hobbies, hobbies which are often very arduous from the point of view of the onlooker, such as gardening or athletics, and we see what a lazy creature man is.

Though all the defects in man's personality are regarded by most people today as being separate evils, it can be seen that they all boil down to the same thing, man's alleged inherent selfishness. Looked at through moralising eyes, man's sins are allied to form the basic one of greed. When we tell people that we are working for an equalitarian society wherein the satisfaction of human needs will only be limited by the ability of society to produce the goods, our listeners seem very often inclined to take us sadly by the hand and lead us to the nearest lunatic asylum. This course not being practical, they laughingly try to

dissuade us by carefully drawing us from the clouds and telling us of the solid facts of life. Everyone knows (except the socialist) that from time immemorial man has been naturally greedy. The Bibles and prayer-books warn us of this vice. God took the matter so seriously that he wisely provided for our welfare by giving Moses to remember "Thou Shalt Not Steal." The modern rulers are a little rueful that he did not put this commandment first on the stony list. You see, our opponents explain, if you have things freely available for people to use just as they require, man's greed will assert itself. Let us suppose that buses had not to contain a conductor to collect the money from people. People would ride around all day and do nothing else. They would hoard things like shoes and coats and leave other people short. In fact, they would make regular gluttons of themselves on the available food and drink. One suspects that this kind of thinking springs from wishful dreaming on empty bellies.

As with the imagined problem of laziness, we can see how ridiculous this is by looking at the way people act today. In some cases now people are in the same relation to some of the things they need as they would be under socialism. Air and water are very necessary commodities. Life would be impossible without them, and yet nobody hoards them. There are today innumerable cases of millions of people going without essential things whilst others have all they need and more besides. Philanthropy, though misguided, is not unknown. Many people have given money or food which they could ill afford to those who were more needy than themselves. So, when we examine men's conduct we find that they cannot be truthfully described as being naturally greedy. If the fact that some people at certain times are greedy proves that all men are greedy by nature, then the opposite is also true in accordance with the same way of reasoning.

Added to the two so-called vices already mentioned are jealousy and licentiousness. Our opponents often speak of people manifesting those evil characteristics in their sexual dealings with each other. The marriage institution as we know it will not continue to exist. Monogamy, like all other institutions which have endured for any length of time, has taken its form because of compulsions external to the wishes of individual men and women. It seems logical to conclude that when human relations become free from property thinking, the bringing of people together in the sexual act will not have any influences behind it other than a mutual liking for each other. In other words, it will be possible to freely exercise ones sexual instincts without taking into consideration things such as the social status of the people concerned. As we see that this word "love" is applied to emotions aroused among humans towards each other; very often without consideration of class, religion, or race, and also at any time of the day or night, the legend of the novelists about moonlight notwithstanding, in any season of the year, without any fixed duration, sometimes for very short periods, sometimes for very long; we can only conclude that a similar state of affairs will continue except with the difference that this erratic behaviour will be socially acceptable. Under Socialism, most of the taboos in operation now would not be possible. Love affairs which for many people today are suggestive

of ugliness because of their contrariness to accepted modes of conduct will be typical in socialist society. The main difference will be that the predominating consideration will be simply of the absence or presence of mutual affinities. When love arrangements are of a kind which preclude ownership or exclusiveness, jealousy, due to the idea of sexual possession, cannot arise.

Human beings are not such that they are possessed of the characteristics usually ascribed to them. Acquisitiveness, aggressiveness, jealousy, hate, etc., are among the things which are dependent upon conditions. Characteristics like the need to eat and reproduce and be active (to work) are about the sum total of those which can be described as being inherent, so inseparable from man that he would not be man without them. When we get to know a little about man's history, about how he thought in the past, about the kind of things he did, about the forms of society which grew up around this pulsating, malleable animal, we can see the weakness of the "human-nature" argument.

F. DUNNE.

ADDRESSES OF COMPANION PARTIES

SOCIALIST PARTY OF AUSTRALIA, P.O. Box 1440M, Melbourne, Australia.
SOCIALIST PARTY OF CANADA, P.O. Box 115, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
SOCIALIST PARTY OF IRELAND, Sec. 32, Hanbury Lane, Meath St., Dublin, Eire.
SOCIALIST PARTY OF NEW ZEALAND, P.O. Box 62, Petone, New Zealand.
WORLD SOCIALIST PARTY OF THE UNITED STATES, Room 307, 3000 Grand River, Detroit 1, Michigan, U.S.A.

The SOCIALIST STANDARD, WESTERN SOCIALIST and other Socialist literature can be obtained from the above.

GROUPS

Will anybody interested in forming a Group or desiring any other information about Groups, apply to Group Secretary, at Head Office, 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

FORUMS

Forums will be held weekly at H.O. on Saturday evenings at 7.30 p.m.

Please come early.

DEBATE

FULHAM TOWN HALL,

WALHAM GREEN (Fulham Broadway Stn.)

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16th

at 7 p.m.

WORLD CRISES—IS THERE A WAY OUT?

C. MAY (S.P.G.B.)

AYANA DEVA ANGADI (Indian Author & Broadcaster)

OUTDOOR MEETINGS IN DECEMBER

Thursdays: Notting Hill Gate, 8 p.m.

Saturdays: Castle St., Kingston, 7.30 p.m.
Jolly Butchers Hill, Wood Green, 7.30 p.m.
Rushcroft Rd., Lambeth, 7.30 p.m.
Hyde Park, 6 p.m.

Sundays: Finsbury Park, 11.30 a.m.
White Stone Pond, Hampstead, 11.30 a.m.
East St., Camberwell, 12 noon.
Hyde Park, 3 p.m.
Beresford Square, Woolwich, 7.30 p.m.

LUNCH HOUR MEETINGS AT 1 P.M.

Mondays: Finsbury Square.
Tuesdays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.
Exmouth Market.
Wednesdays: Finsbury Square.
Thursdays: Tower Hill.
Fridays: Lincoln's Inn Fields.

CROYDON BRANCH

The following lectures will be given at 8 p.m. at Ruskin House, Wellesley Road, Croydon (near West Croydon Station), on Wednesdays:—

Dec. 2nd "Socialists and Nature Cure"—H. Jarvis.
" 16th "The Working Class Movement"—V. Phillips.
" 30th "Why Prices are High"—E. Hardy.
Jan. 13th "Any Questions"—R. McLaughlin.
" 27th (To be announced.)

ISLINGTON BRANCH LECTURE

"Science and Socialism"
by F. Warlow.

Thursday, 17th December, 8 p.m.
At Co-op. Hall,
129, Seven Sisters Road, N.7.

ISLINGTON PUBLIC MEETING

"The World Struggle for Oil"
by L. Courtney.

Wednesday, 16th December, 8 p.m.
Islington Central Library,
Holloway, N.7.

ECONOMICS CLASS

Sundays, 4—6 p.m., at Head Office, starting first Sunday in December (6th December).

SUNDAY EVENING MEETINGS AT

HEAD OFFICE

at 7.30 p.m.

Dec. 6th Plans for Peace Progression Examined—W. Kerr
" 13th Forward to Parliament—C. Groves.
" 20th Is Marxism Economic Determinism?—E. Wilmott.
" 27th No Meeting.
Admission Free. Questions and Discussion.

THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF GREAT BRITAIN

OBJECT.—The establishment of a system of society based upon the common ownership and democratic control of the means and instruments for producing and distributing wealth by and in the interest of the whole community.

DECLARATION OF PRINCIPLES

The Socialist Party of Great Britain holds:-

1. That Society as at present constituted is based upon the ownership of the means of living (i.e., land, factories, railways, etc.) by the capitalist or master class, and the consequent enslavement of the working class, by whose labour alone wealth is produced.
2. That in society, therefore, there is an antagonism of interests, manifesting itself as a class struggle, between those who possess but do not produce, and those who produce but do not possess.
3. That this antagonism can be abolished only by the emancipation of the working class from the domination of the master class, by the conversion into the common property of society of the means of production and distribution, and their democratic control by the whole people.
4. That as in the order of social evolution the working class is the last class to achieve its freedom, the emancipation of the working class will involve the emancipation of all mankind without distinction of race or sex.
5. That this emancipation must be the work of the working class itself.
6. That as the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organise consciously and politically for the conquest of the powers of government, national and local, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and the overthrow of privilege, aristocratic and plutocratic.
7. That as all political parties are but the expression of class interests, and as the interest of the working class is diametrically opposed to the interests of all sections of the master class, the party seeking working-class emancipation must be hostile to every other party.
8. **THE SOCIALIST PARTY** of Great Britain, therefore, enters the field of political action determined to wage war against all other political parties, whether alleged labour or avowedly capitalist, and calls upon the members of the working class of this country to muster under its banner to the end that a speedy termination may be wrought to the system which deprives them of the fruits of their labour, and that poverty may give place to comfort, privilege to equality, and slavery to freedom.

Those agreeing with the above principles and desire enrolment in the Party should apply for membership form to secretary of nearest branch or at Head Office.

DISCUSSION AND STUDY GROUPS

(Non-members cordially invited to meetings. Inquiries should be addressed to Secretary at the addresses given below.)

BRISTOL.—Secretary: J. Flowers, 6, Backfields (off Upper York Street), Bristol, 2. Meets every 3rd Tuesday.

COVENTRY.—F. Morton, 64, Greta Road, Coventry.

HERTS.—Secretary, B. M. Lloyd, 91, Attimore Road, Welwyn Garden City, Meeting, Room 2, Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

HOUNSLOW.—Group meets every Monday at 8 p.m., at 16, Shirley Drive, Hounslow, Middlesex. Correspondence to J. Thurston at above address. Telephone: 7625 Hou.

OLDHAM.—Group meets Wed. 2nd, 16th and 30th December, 7.30, at address of R. Lees, 35, Manchester St. Phone MAI 5165.

RUGBY.—Chris Walsh, 57, Fareham Avenue, Rugby, Warwickshire.

WATFORD.—Group meets Wednesdays at 8 p.m. at T.U. Hall, Woodford Rd., (near Junction Stn.) Enquiries to Sec. J. Lee, Ivy Cottage, Langley Hill, Kings Langley, Herts.

Branch Meetings—continued

Paddington meets Wednesdays 8.0 p.m. "Portman Arms," 422, Edgware Road, W.2 (4 mins. from "Met." Music Hall) Sec. T. J. Law 180, Kilburn Park Road, N.W.6.

Palmer's Green. Branch meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. Stirling House, Stuart Crescent, Wood Green, N.22. Letters to Sec., 18, Victoria Road, Edmonton, N.18.

St. Pancras meets Fridays, 8 p.m., at Fred Tallant Hall, Drummond Street, Euston, N.W.1. Visitors welcomed. Discussions after branch business. Correspondence to Sec. c/o Fred Tallant Hall.

S.W. London meets Thursdays 8 p.m. 52 Clapham High Street, S.W.4. Secretary, M. Wm. Phillips, 44, Chalmers Street, Clapham, S.W.8.

Southend meets every Tuesday at 8 p.m., at Co-op. Hall, Southchurch Road, Southend (entrance Essex St.) Visitors welcome. Enquiries to H. G. Cotts, 109, Kingswood Chase, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Swansea. D. Jacobs, Khayyam, Mansel Drive, Murton Gower, Swansea.

Tottenham meets 2nd & 4th Thursdays in month, 8-10 p.m., West Green Library, Vincent Road, West Green Road, N.15. Communications to Secretary, E. Field, 18 Woodlands Park Road, N.15.

West Ham meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. at Salisbury Road Schools, Manor Park, E.12. Discussion after each meeting from 9 p.m. Communications to D. Deutz, 21, Kenilworth Gardens, Seven Kings, Essex.

Wickford meets every Thursday at 8 p.m. "Franelle," Raweth Lane, Raweth, Shot. Enquiries, J. R. Skilleter, St. Edmunds, Runwell Road, Wickford, Essex.

Woolwich meets 2nd and 4th Friday of Month 7 p.m. Town Social Club, Mason's Hill, S.E.18. Discussion after branch business. Outdoor meetings Sunday 6.30 p.m., Bessford Sq. Sec. H. C. Ramsay, 9 Milne Gardens, Eltham, S.E.9.

BRANCH MEETINGS

All meetings are open to the public and visitors are welcomed.

Birmingham meets Thursdays, 7.30 p.m. at "Bulls Head," Digbeth. Discussions 2nd and 4th Thursdays in month. Correspondence to Secretary, 69, Haslucks Green Road, Shirley Birmingham.

Bloomsbury. Correspondence to Secretary, c/o Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, W.C.1. 1st and 3rd Thursdays (3rd and 17th December) Conway Hall, North Room, 7.30 p.m.

Bradford and District. The branch Secretary will be very pleased to answer all enquiries. Write, Vera Barrett, 26 Harbour Crescent, Wibsey, Bradford or ring Bradford 71904 at any time.

Brighton. Correspondence to Sec. D. Bown, 7a, Clifton Road, Brighton. Branch meets 4th Thursday each month at 7.30 p.m., Co-op Club 23, Hanover Crescent, The Level.

Camberwell meets Thursdays at 8 p.m., "The Artichoke," Camberwell Church Street. Correspondence to Sec. E. M. P. Hirst, c/o H.O., 52 Clapham High Street.

Croydon meets every Wednesday, 8 p.m., at Rucka House, Walsley Rd. (nr. W. Croydon Station). Business and discussion meetings. All enquiries to Secretary, A. C. Wrenn, 28, Jasmine Grove, Penge, S.E.20.

Dartford meets every Friday at 8 p.m. Dartford Labour Club, Lowfield St., Dartford. Discussions after branch business. Letters to F. T. Burvill, 2, Lime Avenue, Northfleet, Kent. Gravesend 6456.

Ealing meets every Friday at 8 p.m. sharp, at The Memorial Hall, Windsor Road, Ealing (nr. Ealing Broadway). Correspondence to E. T. Critchfield, 48, Balfour Road, W.13.

Ecceles meets 2nd Friday in month, at 7.30 p.m. at 5, Gaskell Road, Ecceles. Secretary, F. Lea. **Fulham** meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., 691, Fulham Road, S.W.6, (Nr. Parsons Green Stn.) Business and Discussion meetings. Correspondence to Secretary, at above address.

Glasgow (City) meets Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. Workers Open Forum, Halls, 50 Renfrew Street, C.2. Communications to Sec. T. Mulhern, 366, Aikenhead Road, Glasgow, S.2.

Glasgow (Kelvingrove) meets alternate Mondays, 7th and 23rd December, at 8 p.m., in St. Andrew's Hall, Berkeley Street (Door G). Communications to J. Richmond, 5, Stonyhurst St., Glasgow, N.

Hackney meets Mondays at 8 p.m. at the Co-op Hall, 197 Mare Street, E.8. Letters to A. Iveney, 99, Somerford Estate, Stoke Newington, N.16.

Hampstead meets Wednesdays, 8 p.m. at Blue Danube Club Restaurant, 153, Finchley Road, Hampstead. (Between Swiss Cottage and Finchley Rd. Met. Stn.) Enquiries to F. Webb 52 Goldbeaters Grove, Edgware Middlesex.

High Wycombe Branch meets 1st & 3rd Thurs., 7-9 p.m. discussion after Branch business, "The Nags Head," London Road, High Wycombe. Letters to Sec. J. E. Roe, 191 Bowerdean Road.

Islington meets Thursdays, 8 p.m., at Co-op Hall, 129, Seven Sisters Rd., N.7. Lecture or discussion after Branch business. J. C. Rowan, 39, Ellington Street, Barnsbury, N.7.

Kingston-on-Thames. Sec. 19 Spencer Rd., East Molesey (Tel. MOL 6492). Branch meets Thursdays at 8 p.m. 9 Vicarage Rd, Kingston (opp. Bentalls).

Lewisham meets Mondays, 8 p.m., Co-op Hall, (Room 1) Davenport Road, Rushy Green, Catford, S.E.6. Sec. A. Fisher, 39a, Duncombe Hill, S.E.23.

Leyton Branch meets Mondays 8.0 p.m., at Trades Hall, Grove House, High Road, Leyton. E.10. Lectures and Discussions held 2nd and 4th Monday in each month. Secretary, R. Coster, c/o H.O., 52, Clapham High Street, S.W.4.

Manchester Branch meets fortnightly Tuesdays, 1st, 15th and 29th December, Houldsworth Hall, Deansgate; Sec. J. M. Breakley, 2, Dennison Ave., Withington, Manchester, 20. Didsbury 5709.

Nottingham meets 1st & 3rd Wednesday in each month at the Peoples Hall, Heathcoat St., Nottingham, at 7.45 p.m. Sec. J. Clark, 82a, Wellington Road, Burton-on-Trent.

(Continued in preceding column)